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ABSTRACT

This series of booklets is intended for parents and children to share, reading the booklets together as they listen to the companion tape for each booklet. Each booklet (focusing on a particular topic) answers practical questions from parents, describes activities that can be used at home, notes some books for parents and children, and contains three read-aloud stories. The 12 booklets in volume 2 of this series are on the following topics: (1) Stress and School Performance; (2) Beginning the New School Year; (3) Encouraging Good Homework Habits; (4) Working with the School; (5) Computers and Your Child; (6) Creative Expression through Music and Dance; (7) Success with Test-Taking; (8) Appreciating Poetry; (9) Using the Library; (10) Celebrating Earth Day Every Day; (11) Different Peoples of the World; and (12) Making History Come Alive. Numerous cartoon-like drawings acompany the text. (SR)

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July 1991

Parents and Children Together

Stress and School Performance

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Read-along Stories:

The Monkey Tree
The Big Green Bean of White Oak Hollow
Uncle Edgar and the President's Eye

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This booklet has a companion audio tape on "Stress and School Performance." Occasionally there are directions on the tape that do not appear in the booklet or headings in the booklet that aren't spoken on the tape.

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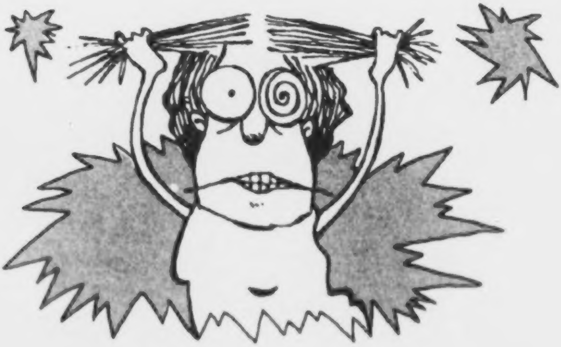
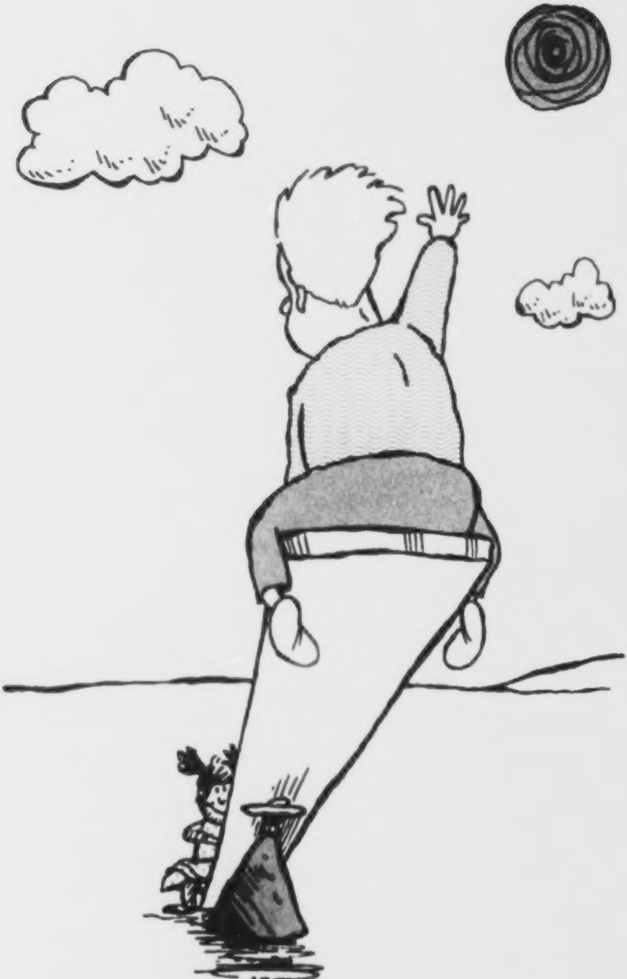


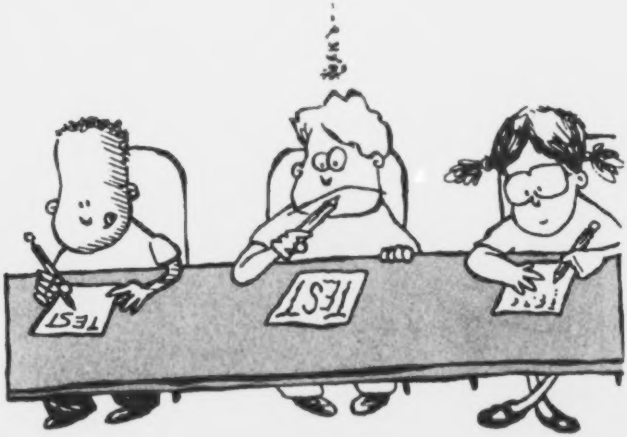


Getting Started

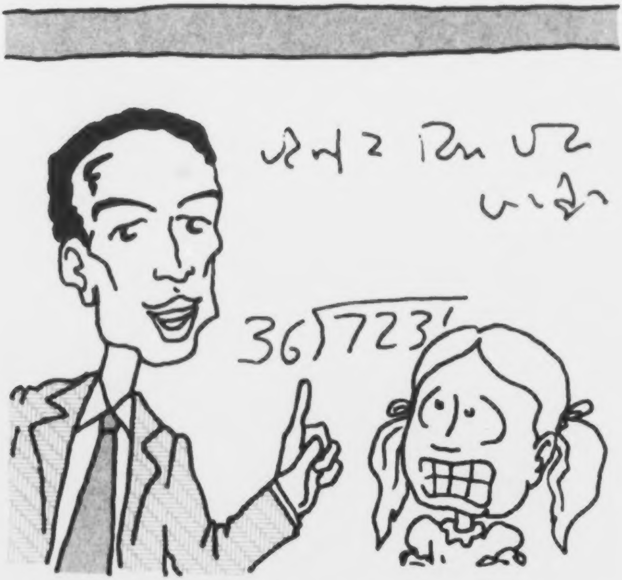
Welcome to this month's issue of *Parents and Children Together.* In this issue we focus on "Stress and School Performance" and how stress affects your child's learning. On side B of the tape (and in the second half of the booklet) we have three read-along stories. We encourage you to listen to these stories and to read them with your children so that they can participate in the excitement of story reading. Of course, your child can also listen to the stories alone, if you wish.

Stress Affects Your Child's Learning

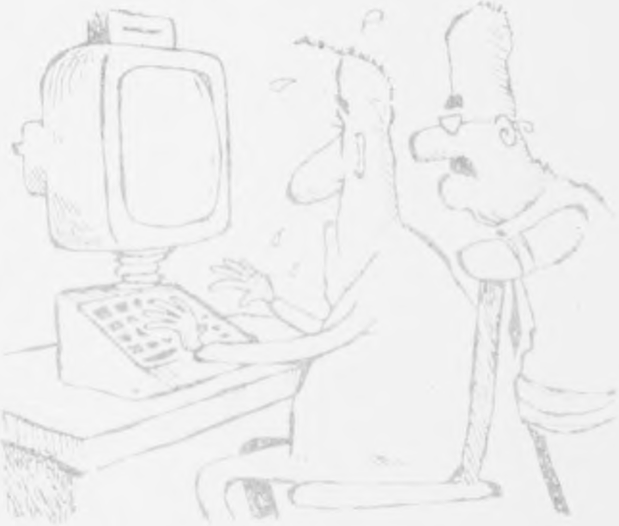
Can you remember facing a test for which you were not well prepared? Most of us remember having those feelings. Our bodies tensed up and our minds seemed to forget even the things we thought we knew. Some of us struggled through those tests with great frustration, feeling that we had failed or, at best, had done poorly. Others of us were so fearful of the consequences that we tried to cheat. We slipped notes inside our shirt sleeves or peeked at our neighbor's paper.



Formal tests in school often bring on stressful feelings. But we and our children are tested everyday. When the teacher calls on us to give answers or to explain our thoughts, there is pressure to perform. Some people react so negatively to those opportunities to perform in public that they freeze and refuse to respond. In their minds it is better to get a poor grade than to submit one's ideas to public ridicule.



But those pressure-filled situations are not limited to school. Adult life, too, brings us face-to-face with pressures that can raise our blood pressure and cause us to act in negative ways. A complaining customer, or a row of figures that doesn't balance, or a boss who always seems to

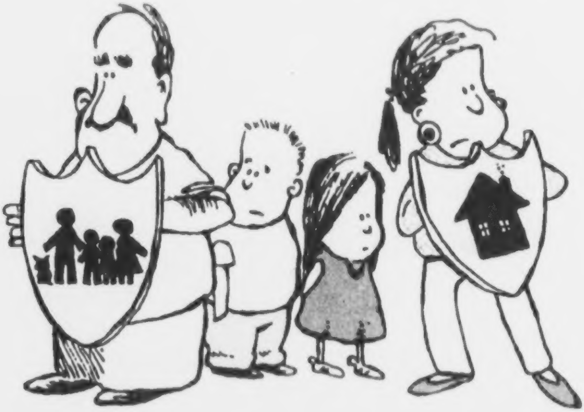


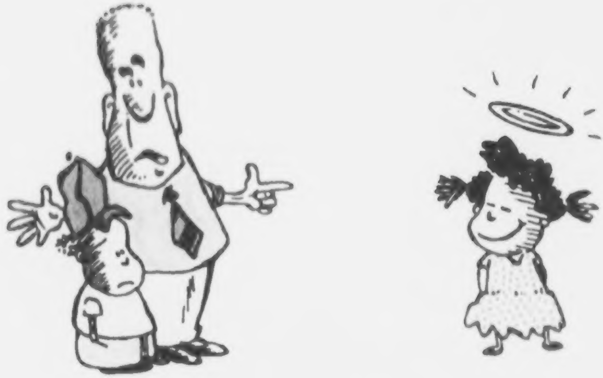
breathe down our necks are a few examples of situations that can lead us to act negatively. A friend of mine, for instance, thought that his boss and his fellow workers were always criticizing him. As a result, he wrecked a bulldozer and quit a good-paying job. He said there was too much stress there for him to survive.

What causes stress? We do.

School, jobs, the family, our friends, and the news media all put pressure on us. They all ask us to perform, to give public evidence that we can do our jobs and can live responsible lives. But that's just normal daily pressure. Everyone faces daily pressure. How we react to that pressure determines our stress level. In other words, the feeling of stress, the feeling of fear or panic is a feeling that we create ourselves. Evidence for the truth of this statement can be found in the ways that different people react to the same moment of pressure. In class, some children will collapse in a jumble of tears when faced with a test. Others will tackle the test with energy and self-confidence. Same test. Same external pressure. Very different levels of stress, very different kinds of reactions.

It is not always clear why some children rise to meet the pressures of school while others freeze or do a poor job. Unwise parents may try to shield their children from all external pressure, then children may never learn how to handle it. Other parents may expect too much of their children. They may expect their children to perform far beyond their abilities, thus pressuring them to do things that they cannot perform. Or children may sense extreme anxiety in their parents when the parents





feel their children will not measure up to others. That usually means that the parent is afraid of being embarrassed because the child is not a star. Yes, a parent can actually exert pressure that the child does not know how to handle. Therefore, the child builds stress and fear that work against good performance.

We don't want to imply that parents are the only cause of stressful reactions in their children. All sorts of pain, illness, ridicule from other children, and other emotional strains may lead your child to see almost any pressure as more than he or she can stand. Moving to a new school, divorce, being excluded from a popular group, an abusive relative—all kinds of negative events can make a child vulnerable and less able to deal with other daily pressures. Thus the child creates within himself a level of stress for these daily pressures that is inappropriate and hurtful.

In other words, anything that adds pressure to the child or to the parent creates an opportunity for the individual to build stress so that it hinders performance instead of helping performance. As the world changes at a faster and faster pace, each of us gets pressure from more and more segments of our life. Our jobs change; we move; we hear about war; we read about competition with other countries; we argue with a neighbor about our space; we fear we won't make a team or get a promotion; we fear the environment isn't safe: all kinds of events and worries in modern life add to the pressures on us and on our children. You can see, then, how easy it is for us to turn these many different pressures into a growing sense of stress.

Signs of Stress in Children

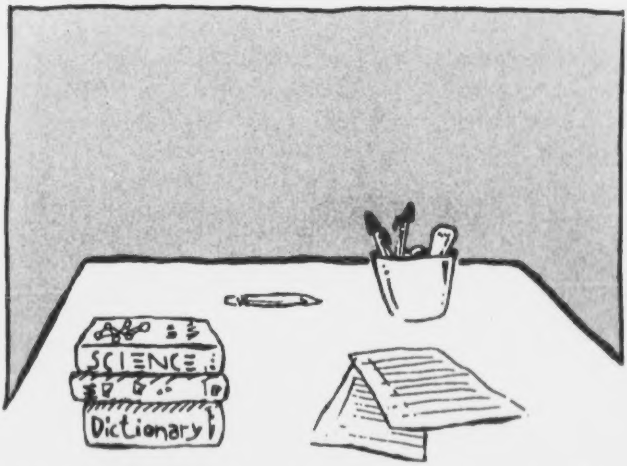
To help your child deal with stress, first learn to recognize its signs. For example, some children withdraw from activities they previously enjoyed; some refuse to respond or to interact with others; some begin to act like little children again; some blame others for all their problems—other children, the teacher, bad light in the classroom, and so on. Some children begin to fear everything associated with school and may even be unable to board the school bus or may have a fit of anger about going to school. In some children, feelings of stress provoke physical symptoms: headaches, stomach cramps, vomiting, bed wetting, frequent nightmares, and so on.

These signs of stress in children should be taken seriously because they can lead to serious problems in school and in the child's attitude toward life.

Here are some of the things that you can do to reduce or prevent stress:

First, tell your child that you have noticed that something is bothering her. Children need to know that someone recognizes that they have a problem and that you care enough to work on it.

Second, try to put as much order in your child's life as you can. A sense of order helps develop a sense of control, a sense of competency. Provide a place for study, for example, where books, paper, and pen are handy. Then help your child set aside specific times for school work. The same kind of orderliness in other aspects of life may also be helpful. This means that meals, chores, entertainment, and bedtime may need to be planned with a degree of regularity, so the child begins to gain control over himself through the orderliness of his environment.

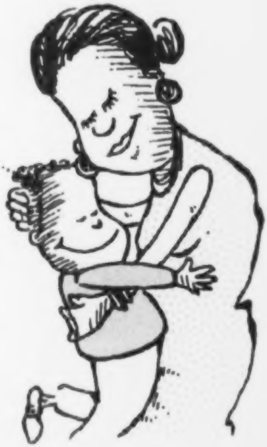


Third, give your child regular encouragement about the things that he does well. Praise his efforts and remind him that competence comes from many repetitions. He can reduce stressful feelings by talking with you or a teacher about pressure and ways to reduce it. People can learn to reduce their feelings of stress.

Fourth, help your child build friendships that will support him. Encourage your child to invite friends to the house, people who will enjoy similar activities and who will boost your child's self-esteem.

Fifth, be a good listener. Give your child a chance to express his or her feelings. You may want to say: "You look like you've had a bad day. Do you want to talk about it?" Then help your child define the problem.

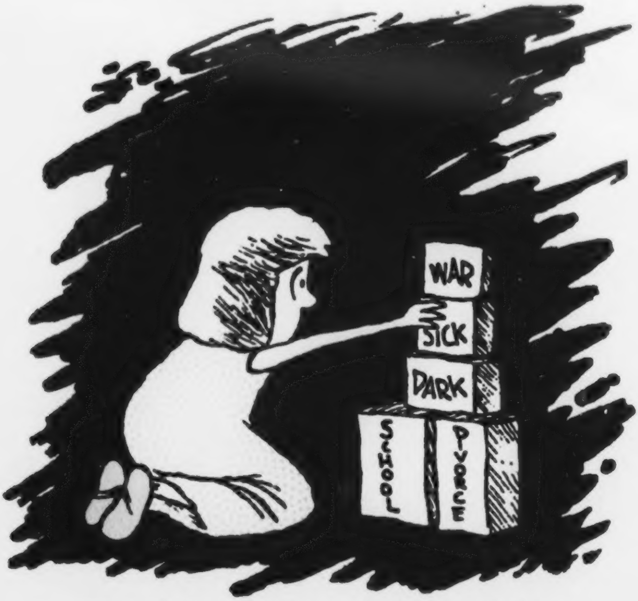
Sixth, hugs and signs of affection are always beneficial.



Seventh, try to reassure your child that all children have pressures and fears. He is not alone. It is important for your child to realize that he can gain control of most of his feelings by realizing that they are *his* feelings. Therefore, he should not blame other people or the circumstances for his anxiety. With your help, and perhaps the help of teachers and other professionals, he can learn to control any negative, stressful feelings that he has.

As you work with your children, please treat their fears and anxieties with respect. They are real fears to your children, and those feelings may in fact hinder school work and make friendships difficult. You can't fight your children's battles, but you can act as an ally, and you can enlist teachers or counselors in the battle as well.

Each of us has our own strengths and weaknesses. As much as possible, focus on your child's strengths. Offer praise and encouragement so your child will see that through his or her strengths he can build self-esteem and reduce harmful stress. In the same light, recognize your child's weaknesses and do not demand that your child do things that will only disappoint both of you.

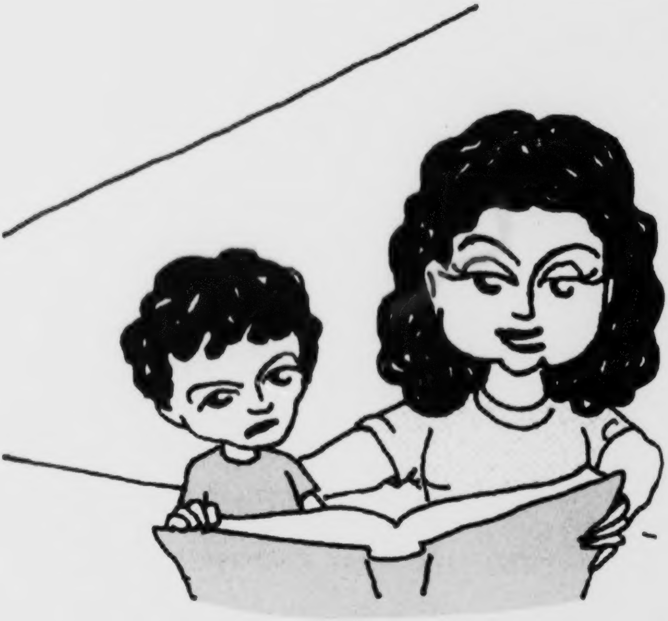


When it is helpful, remind your children that pressures in life can either be used to stimulate the effort needed to succeed or to build fears and anxieties. How they respond is up to the individual. Together, you and your children can learn to respond in healthy, positive ways to pressures that we all feel.

All parents have questions and need answers about their children. Here are some questions that other parents have asked concerning stress.

My son becomes very upset when he thinks he doesn't know something. Often he remarks that "the other kids are smarter than I am." What can we do to build his confidence and help him overcome this anxiety?

Kids change so quickly they sometimes forget how much they have learned. As a parent, you can help your son build self-esteem by pointing out all the new things he does know.

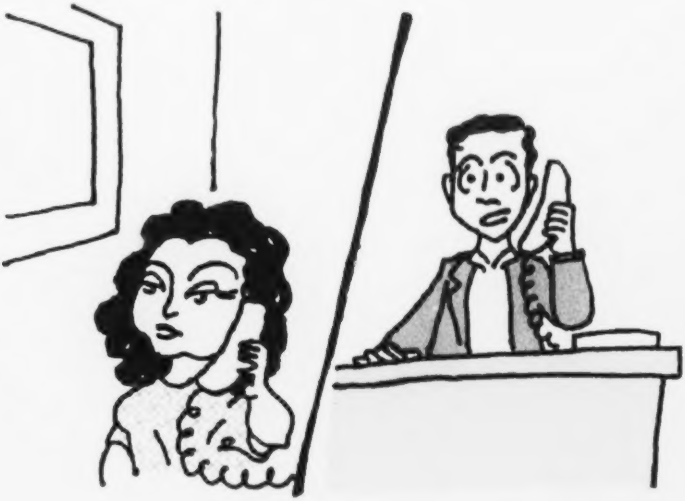


You might get out an old favorite book and say, "Remember when you had trouble reading this book?" Or if your child is struggling with long division, say, "Remember when you couldn't even add 6 plus 9?"

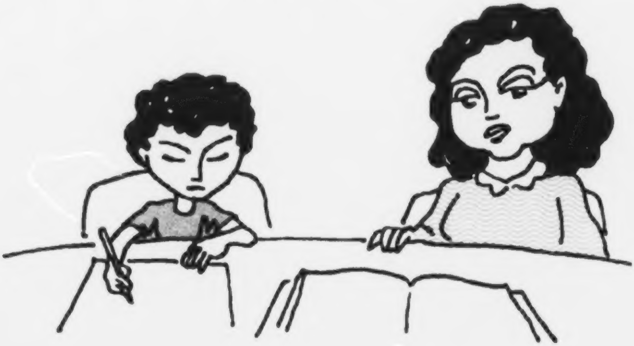
Many children who experience difficulty learning are subjected to harsh words or are criticized by parents, teachers, and peers. Many of these youngsters develop feelings of anxiety because they sense they have no control over what happens to them during learning. To make matters worse, many of these children feel guilty and are emotionally upset because they think they have let their parents or teachers down.

Before positive changes can occur, you and your son must become aware of the problems that are causing the stress and anxiety. Talk with your son about school. Be sure to ask your son what he likes about school or what he thinks he is good at. Share with your son things you think he does well. Talk about the things that he would like to improve or things he is having trouble with at school—classmates, assignments, teachers, or activities outside of school. Discuss with your son ways he can deal with the things that are upsetting to him. Let him know that he does not have to face his problems alone.

It may be necessary to share your son's anxieties about school with his teacher. The teacher's role is crucial in creating an instructional environment that leads to your child's success.



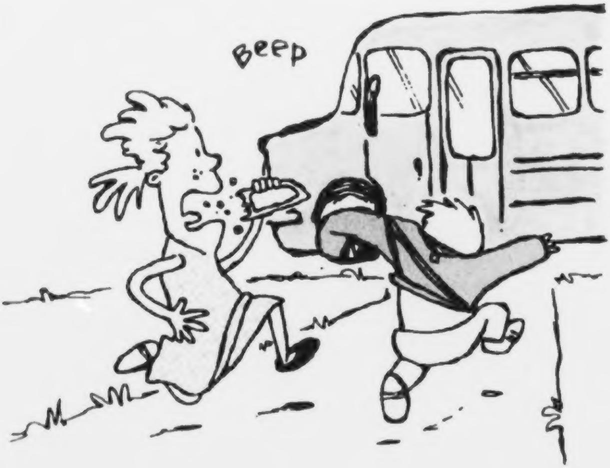
Explain to your son that learning does involve some degree of stress; even adults feel tension when they are confronted with unfamiliar things. Parents and teachers cannot always prevent stress, but they can help a child to cope when it occurs. Encourage him to ask for help when he doesn't understand something or to reread directions and information that are not clear to him. Provide the kind of support at home that will help your son become confident. Take time each evening to discuss things that have happened at school. Become involved in the homework that your son brings home. Offer praise for the things your child has accomplished, and provide support when your child is having difficulty.



We all feel encouraged when we realize we are making progress. A few minutes spent talking with your son about his accomplishments can build self-esteem and confidence that is necessary for success in school.

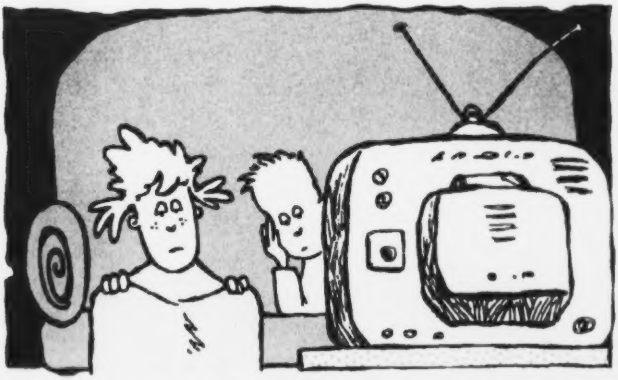
I don't like sending my children to school in a hurried, frantic way. Getting them all off to school—packing lunches, getting breakfast, finishing forgotten homework, making sure they have everything they need—on time can be very stressful for all of us. What can we do to reduce that "morning rush hour?"

In many homes, the morning scene looks like something from "America's Funniest Home Videos!" Kids (and even some parents) fly out the door, eating their breakfast as they run for the bus. Papers fly out of the backpacks or don't even make it into the backpacks!



Let's face it—not all of us are morning people. But children do need to learn to get to places on time and to be ready to go to work. Here are some suggestions for eliminating morning "rush hour" at your house:

First, help your children establish good habits. Make sure they hang up their coats as they walk in the door. Give each child a place to keep boots, hats, gloves, and school bags so they are easy to find can the next morning. Second, schedule a regular homework time, and establish a regular bedtime. Kids who zonk out on the couch watching a TV program at 11:00 can't rise or shine the next morning. Third, help your children learn to be responsible for getting themselves up in the morning. Provide an alarm clock for each bedroom or child. It may help to set everyone's alarm clock fifteen minutes earlier. Even a few extra minutes can make a real difference. Creating a sense of order is a good way to start.

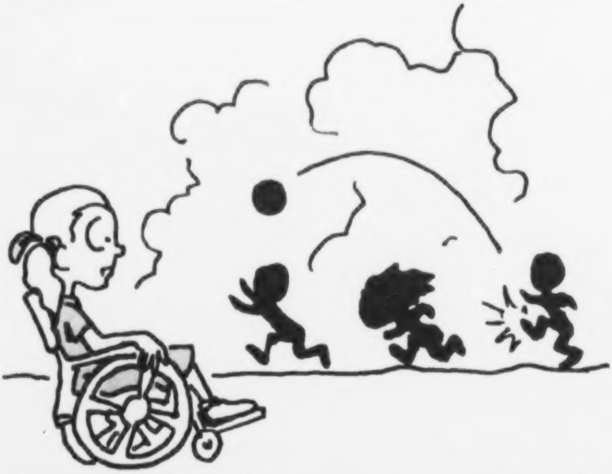


Fourth, a successful morning begins at night. Before your children go to bed, have them lay out everything they will need for school. This is a good time to make sure everyone has lunch money, homework, and any permission slips that require parent signatures for field trips. Also, have them select the clothes they will wear the next day.

Oh, by the way, before everyone leaves, take a second to say, "I love you" and "Have a good day" to each child. Nothing will get their day...and yours...off to a better start.

Our daughter has some learning difficulties. I sometimes feel this contributes to her difficulty in making friends. How can we support her in getting through some of these difficult times?

The pressure to be accepted and liked by others is felt by all children, typical or not. However, the special child often has more difficulty in establishing friendships and therefore has a greater chance of feeling left out. Some special children attend schools or programs outside of the neighborhood, which makes the task of making friends even more difficult. Feelings of rejection or exclusion, combined with not living up to expectations at school, can all build up and contribute to unhealthy stressful feelings.

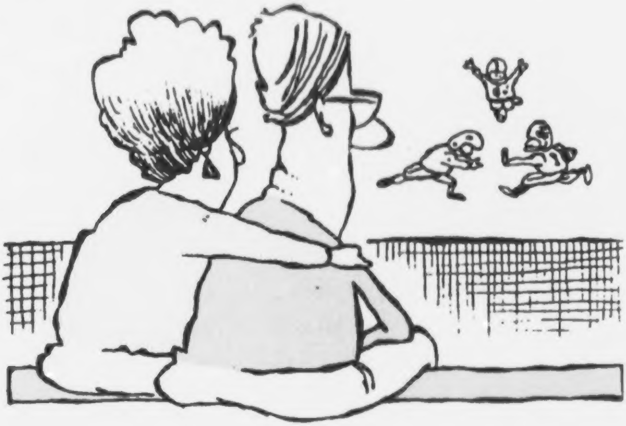


Having a friend—someone with whom you can share confidences or enjoy similar pastimes—creates a feeling of self-worth that can reduce school stress. Help your daughter make friends by encouraging her to invite children to your home. It is worth the extra effort on your part.

I want our children to do well in school. How can I encourage them to do their best without putting too much pressure on them to excel in school?

A recent national survey asked children about their biggest worry. Kids said it is the intense pressure to do well in school. Twenty-four percent of the young people said that "doing well" in school and in sports is what they worry about most.

We want to support our children's desire to do well, but we may need to rethink the kinds of messages we give them. For instance:

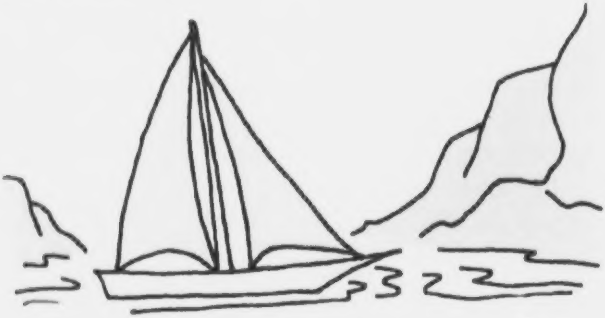


When you watch your children in athletic events, do you criticize their performance afterwards? Or do you try to focus on the fun of participating in the event?

What happens when your children bring home a test? Do you first talk about the questions they got wrong? Or do you look for what they got right or did well?

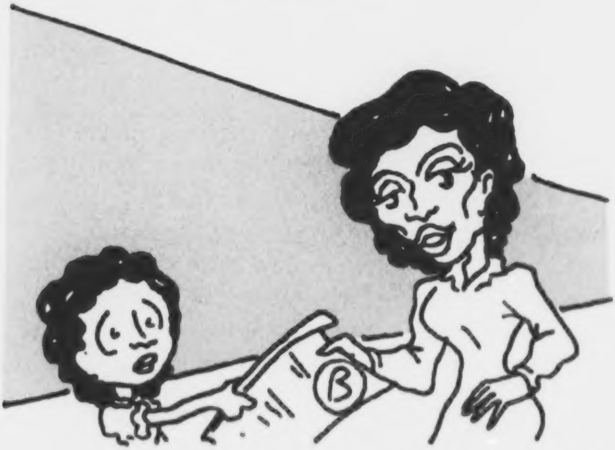
How about when your children help you with a job around the house? Do you emphasize the things they need to do better? Or do you thank them for their help and talk about one thing they did especially well?

Have conversations with your children that support what they are doing in school and in other activities. Focus on your children's strengths—what they have accomplished—rather than on what they have not been able to do successfully. Take every genuine opportunity to praise their efforts. This positive approach will show your children that you appreciate the good things they do. There is no better way to keep them sailing ahead on an even keel.



I like going over the papers and tests my daughter brings home from school, but she doesn't like doing this. Should I push this?

Your daughter can learn a lot from a test or an assignment—even after it's graded and handed back. A test can show where she had difficulty and, perhaps, why. This is especially important in subjects or skills that build on earlier learning. For example, kids who can't multiply and divide won't be able to understand fractions.



When your daughter brings home a graded test paper, sit down and discuss it. Talk about the right answers as well as the wrong answers. Praise your daughter for what she has done well. When you see a wrong answer, ask your child to explain why she answered as she did. Sometimes children know the right answer, but express it incorrectly. Other times, they may need to review some material.

It helps to talk about how well your daughter used her time during the test. Did she finish? If so, suggest that she spend some time after she finishes to check her work. Did guessing help? Helping children learn to take tests builds confidence the next time. Going over work in this way helps your daughter establish study habits that can help her when she works independently.

Finally, look to see what the teacher has written on the test paper. Are there any suggestions for improvement? If you have any questions, be sure to contact your daughter's teacher.

If you have questions you want answered, please write to us and we will try to answer them for you. You may find your question in another issue of *Parents and Children Together.*

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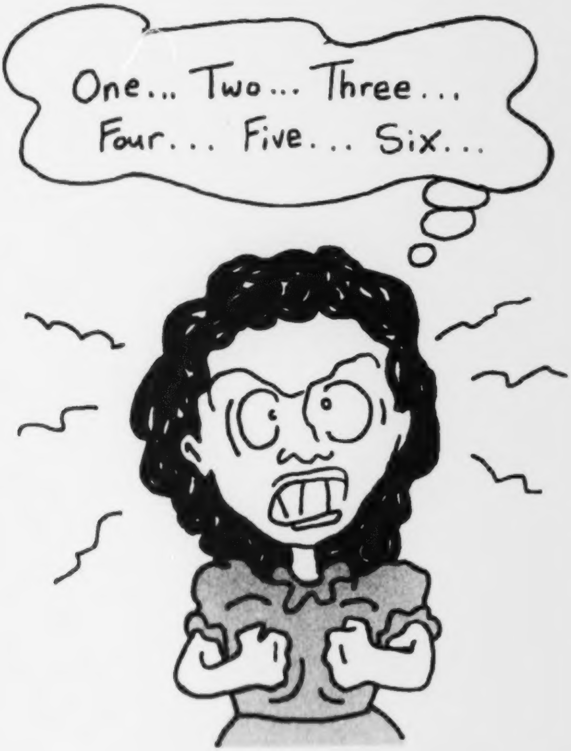
Activities to Help Cope with Stress

Use some of the following activities to help your child learn how to deal with stress.

- Exercise increases the heart rate and stimulates the circulatory system, which helps the body reduce the effects of stress naturally. If you or your child are feeling pressured, upset, sad, or angry, try going for a long, brisk walk, or doing some aerobic exercises.
- "Laughter is the best medicine" may be an old saying, but there is truth in it. When you laugh, chemicals are released in your body that help you feel more relaxed. When life gets hectic, watch a funny slapstick comedy or read some comics or a joke book with your children and have a good belly-laugh together.

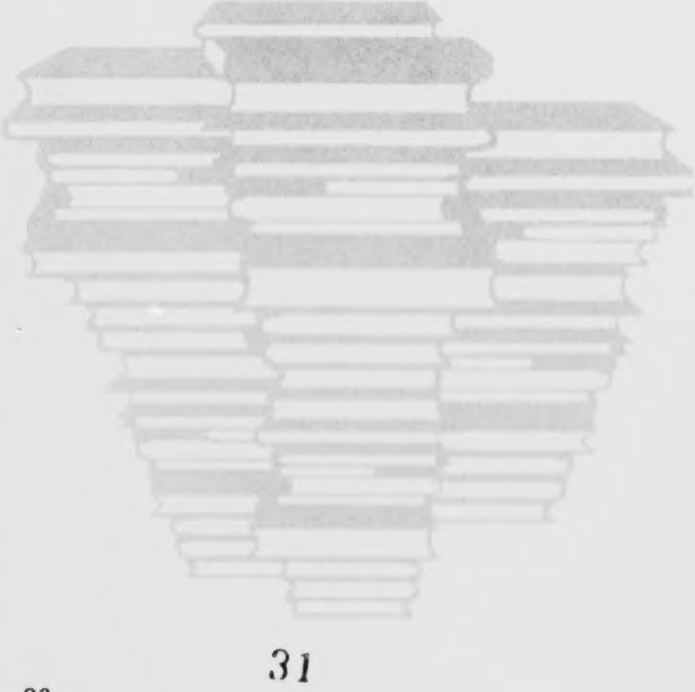

One... Two... Three...
Four... Five... Six...

Help your child learn to control herself. When reacting to stressful situations, teach her to close her eyes and count slowly to ten before she says or does anything.

Being able to express our feelings can sometimes reduce the stress that we feel. You can encourage your child to talk to you, or to someone else he trusts, about what is bothering him. Or suggest that he write down his feelings and thoughts in a diary.

Books for Parents and Children

On pages 28–36, we have put together lists of books for parents and children. Several of the books are about children who are experiencing some type of stress in their lives. We encourage you to take the time to read a few of these books with your child.



At the beginning of this issue, we mentioned that Side B of the audio tape contains three stories that are designed to be read-along stories. You may want to take some time to look ahead at these stories before you read along with your child. It is also important to talk about the story ahead of time.

Before reading the story, talk about the title or things that might happen in the story, Then—after the story is finished—talk about it again. By the way, if in the middle of the story something funny or exciting or interesting happens, it's O.K. for you to stop the tape and discuss the event, or for you to ask your child questions such as "Is there really a Monkey god?" or "Who was Marie Antoinette?" These questions make your conversation about the story more natural and more valuable.

When you and your child are ready, turn the tape to Side B and listen to the stories as you read along together, or you may read the stories aloud while your child reads along in the booklet.

Books for Parents

Books to Help Children Cope with Separation and Loss, by Joanne E. Bernstein. Offers ideas on using books to help children cope with death, divorce, separation, desertion, serious illness, war and displacement, foster care, stepparents, adoption, homelessness, new sibling, new school, and new neighborhood. Gives an extensive list of books with description, reading level, and interest level. Includes a list of resources for adults.

The Divorce Workbook: A Guide for Kids and Families, by Sally Blakeslee Ives and others (Waterfront Books). A workbook to help children express and explore their fears and feelings about divorce by reading, writing, talking, and drawing. Covers marriage, separation, divorce, emotions, and ways children can help themselves cope. Explains the "legal stuff" such as custody, child support, and visitation.

Helping Children Cope with Stress, by Avis Brenner. Describes the range of stresses children face and gives different strategies to help them cope. Topics include childhood stress; one-parent, two-parent, and multi-parent families; separation; death; adoption; divorce; physical, sexual, and emotional abuse; neglect; and living with an alcoholic parent.

Books to Read Together

Ages 4-6

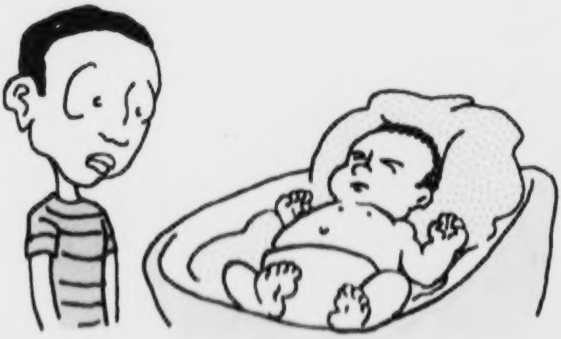
Where Is Daddy? The Story of Divorce, by Beth Goff. Janeydear lived in her house with her daddy, mommy, and her dog named Funny. Then her parents get a divorce and Janeydear becomes sad and upset. Her parents help her to understand, and she learns to be happy again.

Everett Anderson's Goodbye, by Lucille Clifton. Everett Anderson is struggling through the different stages of grief after his father dies. Everett comes to understand that even though his father is gone, his father's love will always be with him.

Michael in the Dark, by Alison Coles (EDC Publishing). When Michael's parents go out for the evening and leave him with a new babysitter who turns out the light, he becomes so frightened he cannot fall asleep. Then his mother turns on the light to show him what is making the scary shapes in the dark, and he is able to go to sleep.

Ages 6-8

Everett Anderson's Nine Month Long, by Lucille Clifton. First Everett's mom marries Mr. Perry, and now they are going to have a new baby in their family. Everett is a little wary about having a new brother or sister, until Evelyn arrives and fills their home with joy.

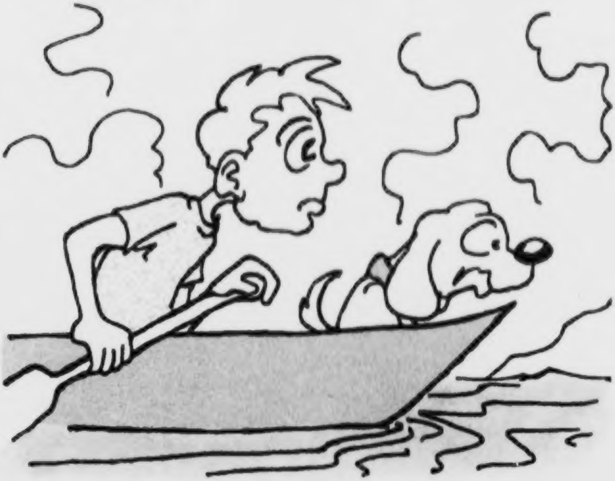


Only Six More Days, by Marisabina Russo (Greenwillow Books). Ben is counting down the days to his birthday and it is driving his older sister, Molly, crazy. Molly finally decides to help Ben celebrate, but only after she counts down the days until her birthday.

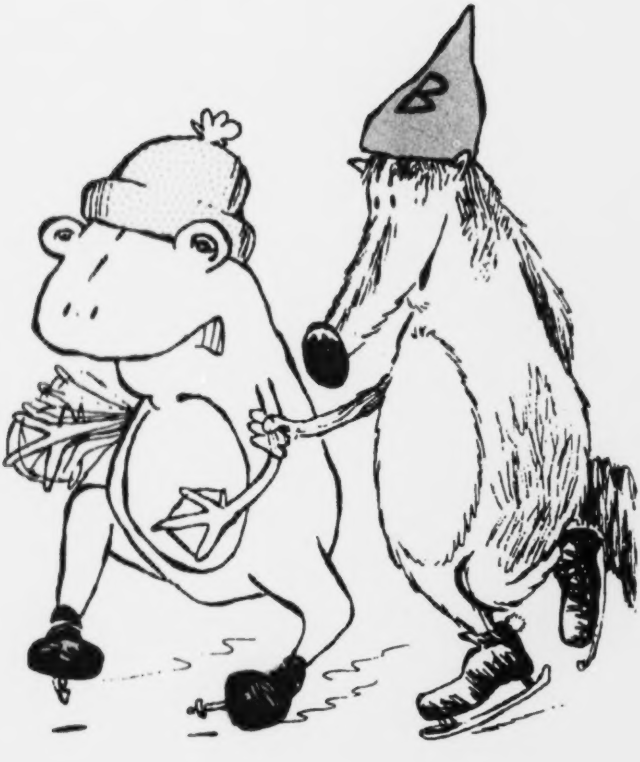
How Many Stars in the Sky? by Lenny Hort (Tambourine Books). Mama's away one night, and her son cannot sleep. Then the boy finds that his daddy hasn't been able to sleep either. Together they set off into the night on a journey of discovery.

Ages 8-10

The Washout, by Carol Carrick. When a summer storm washes out the road, Christopher and his dog Ben row across the lake for help. Christopher stays calm in the face of danger and manages to survive and find help.



Annie and the Old One, by Miska Miles. Annie tries to make time stand still so that her aged grandmother will not die. She eventually comes to understand that life and death are both part of an ongoing cycle.



Badger's Parting Gifts, by Susan Varley. Badger is a dear friend to his neighbors and he teaches each one of them something special. When Badger dies, his friends gather to share their memories of Badger and the gifts he gave to them.

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Books for Your Children to Read by Themselves

Ages 4-6

Frog on His Own, by Mercer Mayer. Follow the adventures of this frog through the park. Find out what happens when he leaves his friends to strike out on his own. (A wordless book.)

Shadows and Reflections, by Tana Hoban. A collection of photographs displays the shadows and reflections of various objects, animals, and people.

When the New Baby Comes, I'm Moving Out, by Martha Alexander. A young child does not like the idea of a new baby coming to his house to live. He does not want to share his things or his family. After his mother shows him how much he means to her and explains the neat things a "big brother" gets to do, he decides a new baby will be terrific.

Ages 6-8

Harriet's Recital, by Nancy Carlson. Harriet loves her ballet class, but hates the thought of a recital. She overcomes her stage fright, dances well, and enjoys the recital.

Hunches in Bunches, by Dr. Seuss. Explores the frustration and confusion that occurs during decision-making by using humorous rhyme. Each "hunch" tries to help the character make up his mind about what he wants to do.

Horace, by Holly Keller (Greenwillow Books). Horace has spots and all the members of his adopted family have stripes. After searching for a family who look just like him, Horace decides that being part of a family depends on how you feel, not how you look.

Ages 8-10

The Berenstain Bears' Moving Day, by Stan and Jan Berenstain. The bear family decides to move from their cozy cave home to a new house in the valley. Brother Bear isn't sure if he will be happy and feels anxious about the move. Then they move in, and the new house becomes their home.

Harry and Willy and Carrothead, by Judith Caseley (Greenwillow Books). Oscar's hair is the color of carrots, and his friend Harry doesn't have a left hand. Together they become friends with Willy and they all overcome some of their prejudices about appearances.

The Sorely Trying Day, by Russell and Lillian Hoban. Father comes home after having a bad day and discovers Mother is also having a bad day, because of the poor behavior of the children and their pets. They all make up and feel much better afterward.

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Magazines

Also ask the librarian for the following magazines for children:

Child Life
Creative Kids
Cricket
Duck Tales Magazine
Highlights for Children
Hot Dog
Humpty Dumpty's Magazine
Jack and Jill
Kid City
Kids Life and Times
Let's Find Out
Mickey Mouse Magazine
Peanut Butter
The Real Ghostbusters
Reflections
Turtle Magazine for Preschool Kids
Zoobooks

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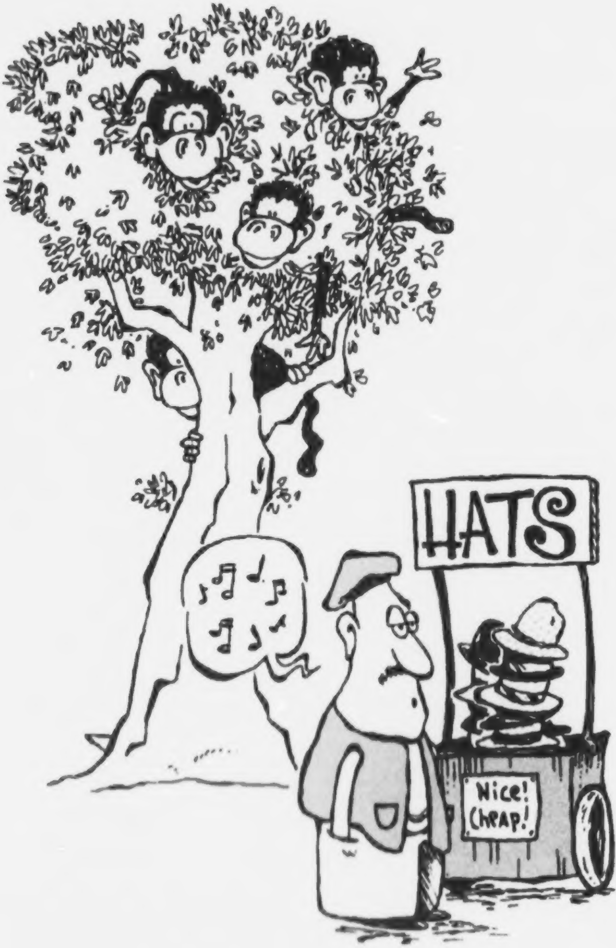
Read-along Stories


HATS
Nice!
Cheap!

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The Monkey Tree

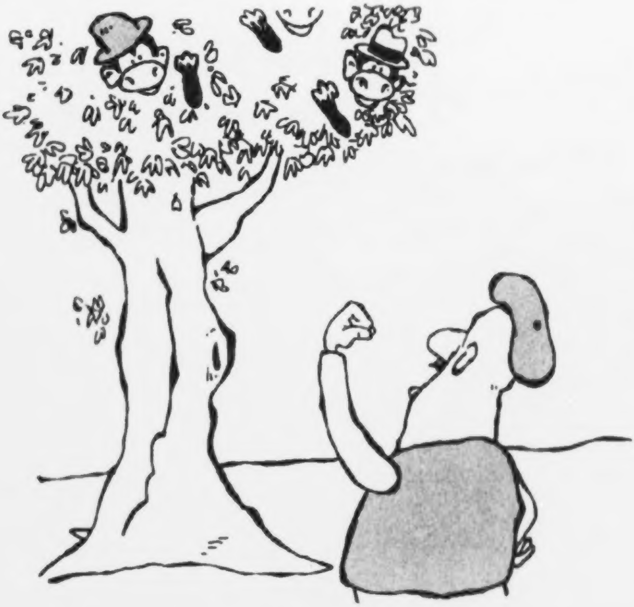
Retold by B. K. Sharma and Sharon Pugh

Things to do before reading the story

Talk about all the things you know about monkeys. Think about monkeys you have seen at the zoo, in movies, or on TV. What are some of the clever things that monkeys do? What do monkeys do that are like what people do? Write down your ideas about monkeys. See if any of them are like what you read in "The Monkey Tree."

One day a hat salesman set up his cart under a large tree by a road where many people traveled. He called out, "Hats for sale. Get your hats here." While keeping an eye on the passing crowd, he did not notice that the tree was full of monkeys.

In order to demonstrate how nice his hats were, he put the finest one on his head. Imagine his astonishment when, in a flash, all the monkeys jumped down around him. He was quite startled as they reached suddenly into his cart with their little hands, and took all the hats and put them on their heads. With another leap they jumped back into the tree, peering down at the merchant from under the brims of their new hats. He shouted, "Give me my hats back." The monkeys seemed to laugh at him. He was quite sad as he realized that except for the hat on his head, he had nothing to sell.

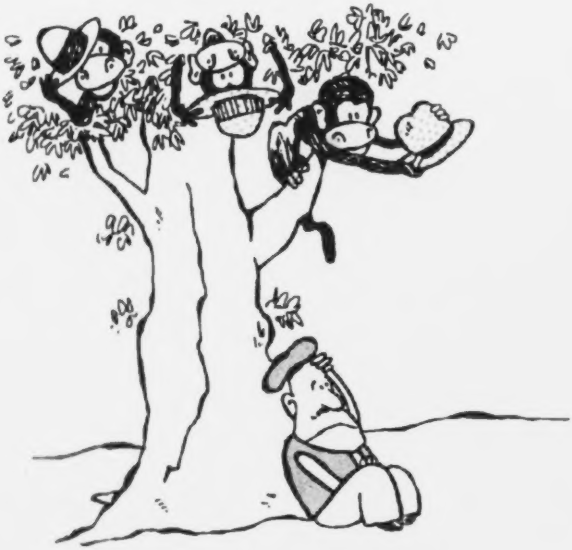


Then, as he was thinking about his situation, he got angry. He shook his fist at the monkeys and demanded, "You monkeys come down right now." The monkeys just shook their little fists back at him and chattered. The man decided to climb up the tree to get the hats for himself, but the higher he climbed, the higher the monkeys scampered, until they were on the highest branches, which were too thin to support the man's weight.

Finally he tried a threat. "If you don't give my hats back at once," he warned them, "I will call Hanuman, the Monkey God, to come and punish you."

The monkeys considered this threat among themselves. "No," they said to each other, "Hanuman* won't come here." So they sat high on their limbs, while tipping their new hats this way and that.

The poor man then sat down, sadly holding his head because he could think of nothing else to try. Just then a young man came along. "What seems to be the problem, my friend?"



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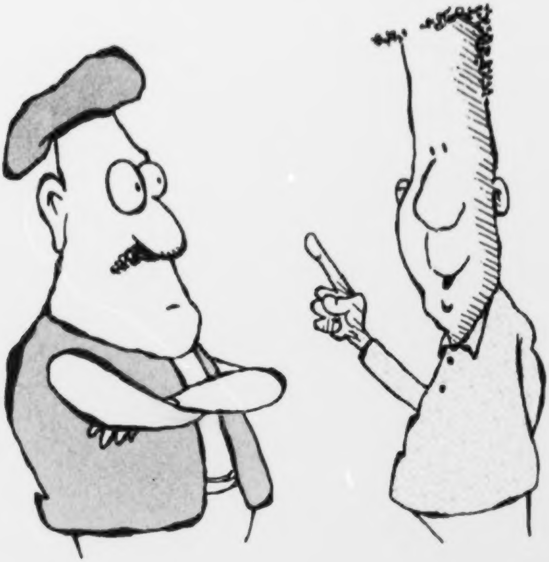
* Hanuman is the Hindu diety for physical strength and power, often consulted by wrestlers. Therefore, the monkeys would think twice before risking his irritation.



The hat salesman explained, "These silly monkeys have taken my hats and are laughing at me."

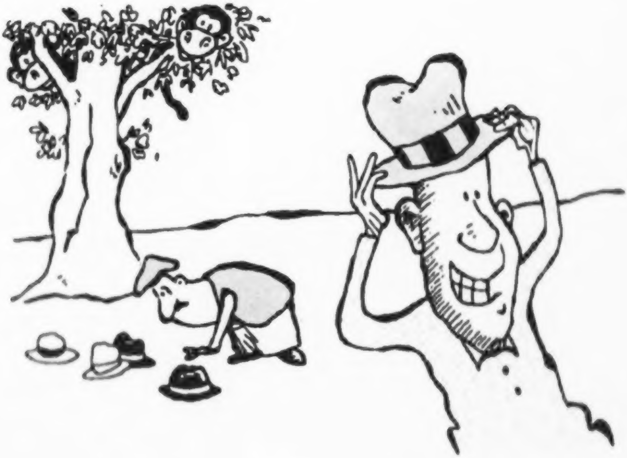
The young man thought for a moment and said, "I know the solution. If you will give me the hat you are wearing, I will get back all the rest of your hats."

"But this is the only hat I have left," protested the man.

"Nevertheless, if you want the rest of your hats back before it is too late to make a single sale today, you must give me that one." Since he had no choice, the man handed over his last hat, which the young man promptly put on his head.

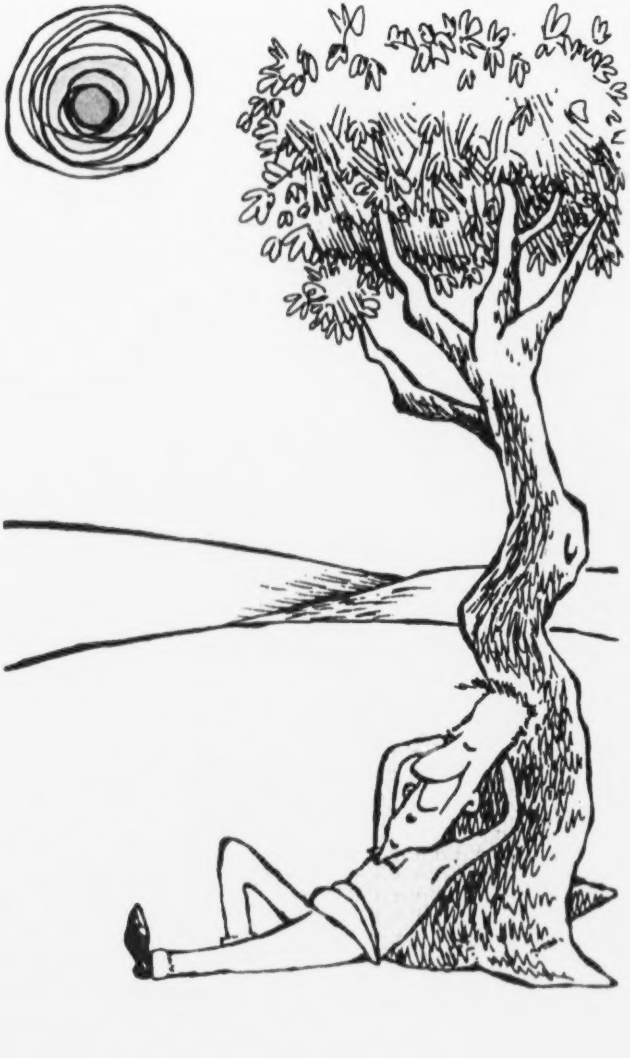
Then he stepped out into full view of the monkeys and waved at them. They all waved back. Next he lifted the hat high above his head, and the monkeys returned the salute, lifting their hats high in the air too. Finally, he threw his hat down on the ground with great force. The monkeys quickly did the same, and all the hats came showering down out of the tree.

The hat salesman quickly gathered up his hats as the young man walked on, wearing both his fine new hat and a big smile.



Things to do after reading the story

Can you think of other ways the man might have got his hats back? Write another story with another way for the man to get his hats back.



The Big Green Bean of White Oak Hollow

by Theo Elizabeth Gilchrist

Things to do before reading the story

Talk about what you would do with a giant green bean. How would you cook a giant green bean? How would it taste? Would it be useful for anything besides eating?

White Oak Hollow that summer was hot and dusty brown. Creeks dried. Dogs whimpered. Cats whined. Even Jed found that doing nothing had lost its fun.

"Take a little bitty snooze 'neath the hickory tree, and zoom up zippy as can be," he sang as he flopped down.

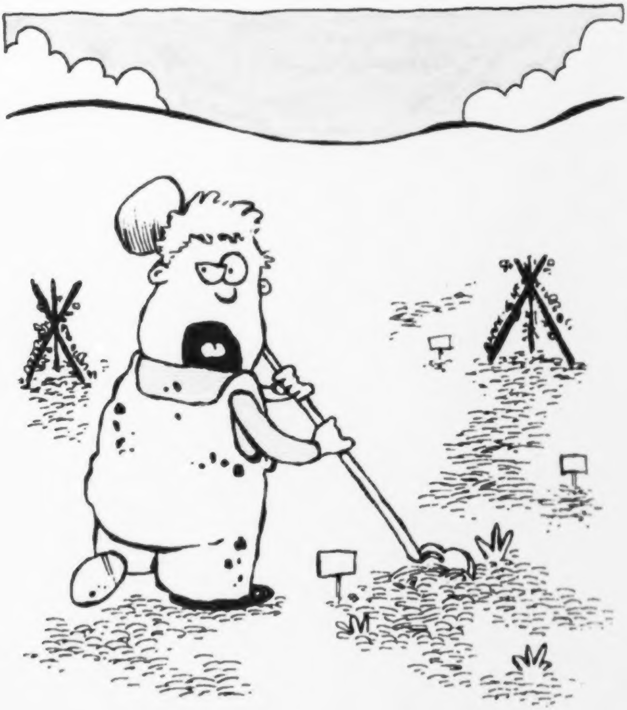
"Zoom up? To what?" his neighbor Cora Jean called over to him.

"Up and down to resting again, busy-dizzy Cora," he answered.

Cora Jean had the only green garden. This year, along with potatoes, tomatoes, onions, and herbs, she had planted string beans. Neighbors came to admire.

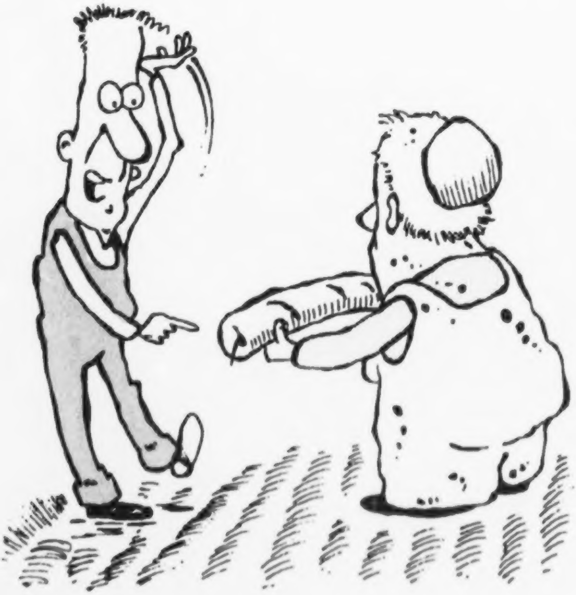
"Of course her garden's green," Jed told them. "She's up all night watering. That one will drop someday from too much doing."

"If you dropped, Jed, nobody could tell the difference," Cora Jean snapped back as she hoed and weeded.



"You never mind, Cora," Jed muttered, sprawling out again.

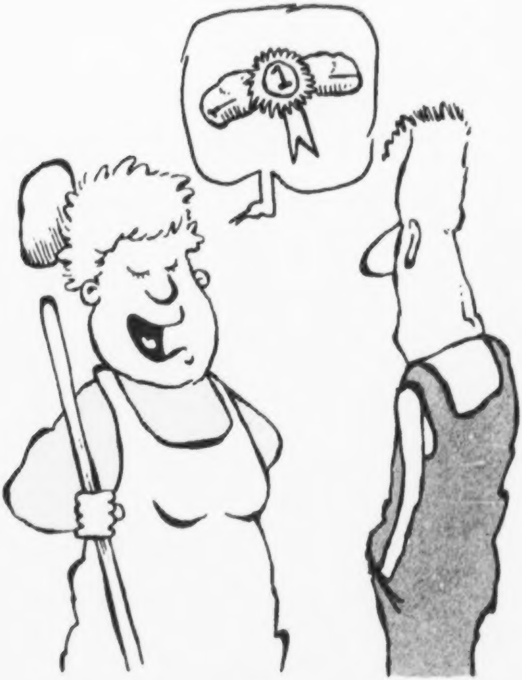
Cora Jean riled him with her working ways. On the other hand, he had built his shack nearby on purpose. Cora grew good stuff. He could easily help himself when her back was turned.



"Come here, Jed. See this!" Cora called. Slowly Jed pushed himself up and ambled to where Cora squatted in her garden. "Look at this bean, Jed."

Growing at the bottom of one of the stalks was a bean a foot long.

"Great catfish, Cora! It's bigger than a cucumber. Probably tough, though. Whack her off."



"No such thing," said Cora. "Everything's got some use"except maybe you, Jed. This bean just might be meant for getting me a blue ribbon at the county fair. And I warn you, Jed." She shook her hoe at him. "When you're stealing my beans, don't you dare take this one."

"Aw, who'd want it? Besides, I don't steal. I just keep your too-muchness from spoiling." He turned and stomped away. "I've got to get to work."

"What work?" Cora called after him.

"Carving walking canes, that's what."

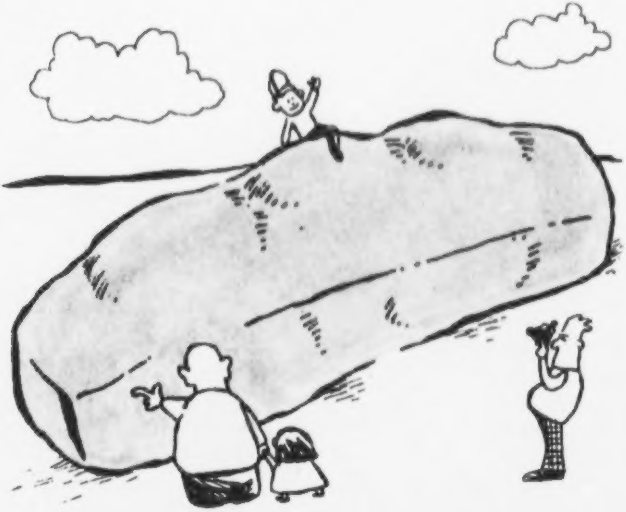
"Is that what you plan to do with all those saplings you hacked down three years ago?"

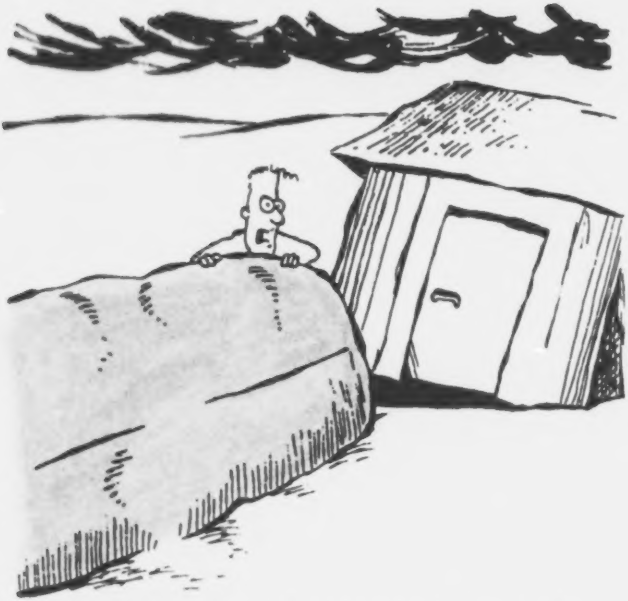
"Yup."

"You haven't made one cane yet."

"Wood's got to age." Jed slumped down and closed his eyes.

The big bean grew. It swelled like a blimp. Folks came for miles to see it. They climbed on stools and rubbed their hands along its thick, bulging sides.





"That bean's pushing to knock my shack down," Jed said. "It's got to go!"

"Nope," said Cora firmly.

"How will you haul it to the fair? Besides, when it rains there's going to be one mess of stinking, rotting bean."

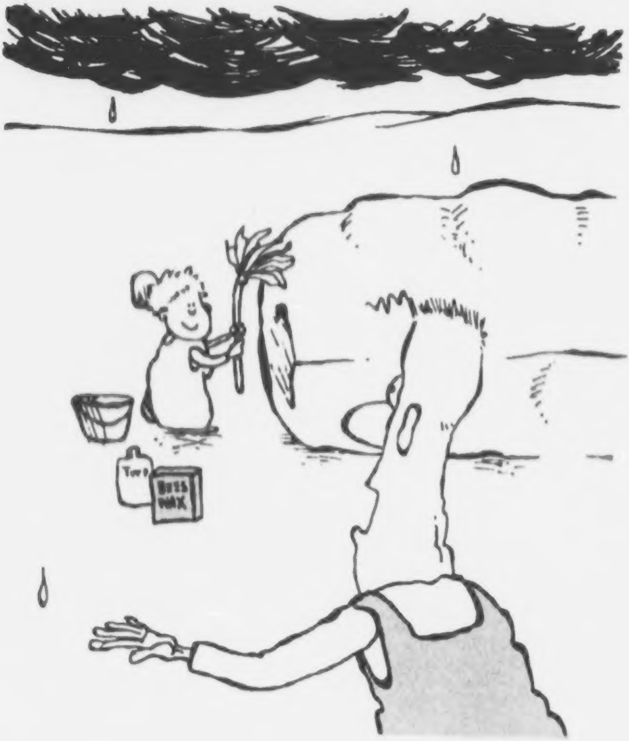
Cora sniffed the air and looked skyward. "You think it's going to rain?"

Jed shrugged.

Cora rushed into action. She set a bucket of turpentine in a tub of warm water, added melted beeswax, and slowly mixed it with a long-handled mop.

Jed's eyes bugged out. "Cora, you doing what I think?"

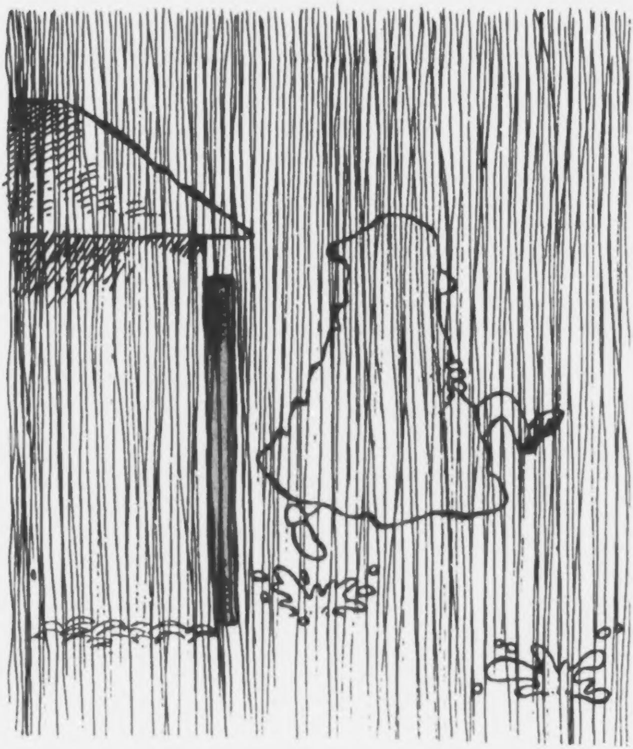
"You bet I am. I'm waterproofing this bean." With her mop she swooshed the mixture over the bean, just as thunder rumbled in the distance.



"It's coming, Cora. At last! Rain!"

It started high up in the mountains. In no time the creeks filled, gushing down the hills. Hurrahs echoed down the hollow. Jed took his rest indoors.

On and on the rain poured. Skies were gray-black. Creeks swelled into angry rivers. Men, women, children, animals rushed by. "We're flooding out!" they shouted. "Everything's going. Hurry, Cora, or you'll drown for sure!"



Draped in oilcloth, Jed stumbled from his shack. "Roof's leaking. Water's got to my bed!" he called.

"You better go, Jed. Hurry."

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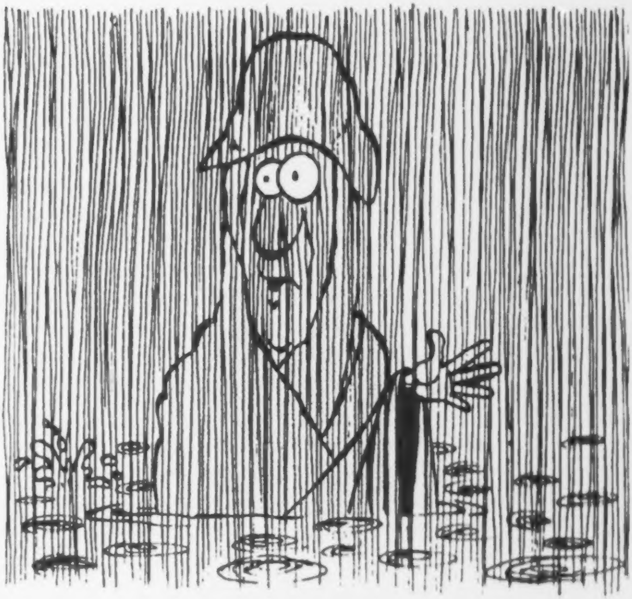
"You know I hate hurry. What about you, Cora?"

"And leave this bean?" Cora said, holding her umbrella and rubbing her cheek against the bean's side.

"Never knew anyone willing to drown for a bean."

"How about drowning for a snooze? Get on with you, Jed."

"Cora, come on. The water is lapping at my bellybutton. You can't take old green-boy with you."



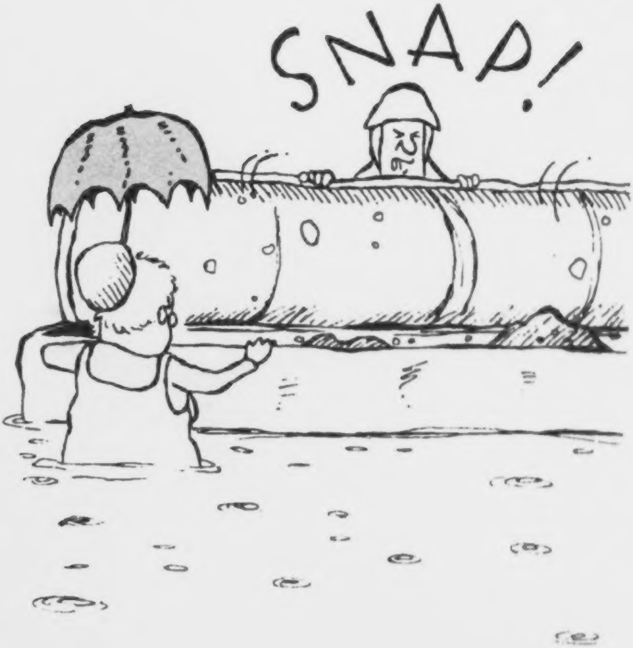
Cora stiffened. "I can't? But I can. Hurry! Get scoops and tools. We got a job here."

Jed left and came back puffing. "Don't ask me to get any more stuff. I barely made it."

"Help me pry this bean open, Jed."

"You're nuts, Cora."

"Move! Move!"



Together they snapped the bean open.

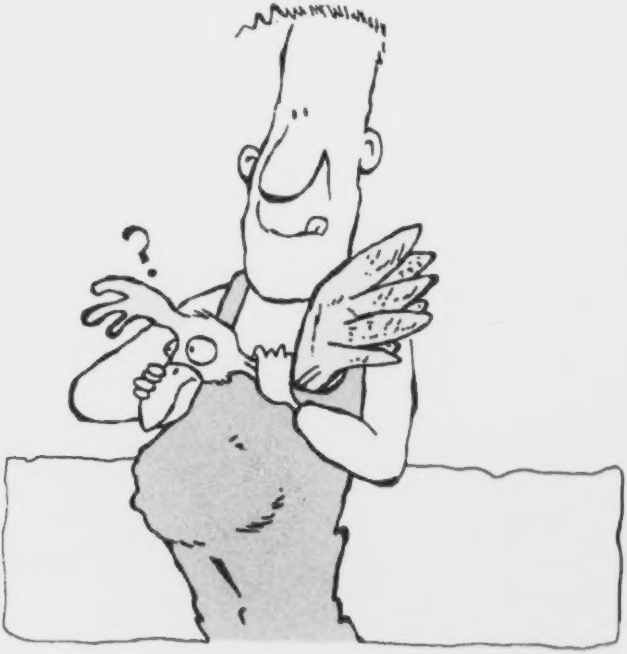
"Scoop her out," Cora called.

They quickly loosened the big seeds and fed them to the churning water. The two halves of shell rose, wriggling to be free.

"Hang on tight, Cora! I'll get your clothesline and tie her to the tree, or we'll lose her for sure."

Jed tied the bean and lashed the sides together. "Look at that. It's a floating bean boat."

"And just in time," Cora said. "I can't stand up against this water much longer. I'll get what food I can. You grab that rooster and those hens off the shed roof." Jed reached for the flapping rooster and put him under the bib of his overalls. Then with a squawking hen under each arm, he waded over and plopped them all into the boat.



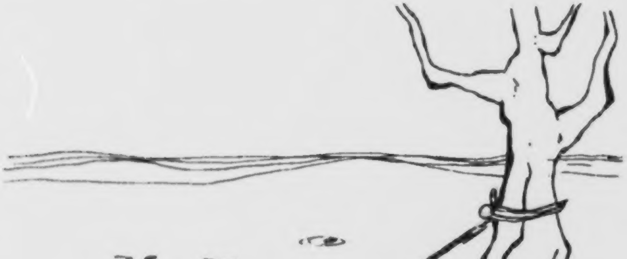
"Ready, Jed? I'll cut her loose."

"Hold it, Cora. I'll get my canes."

Jed splashed back, gasping. "Here—potatoes and the only canes that haven't washed away, but they'll do."

"For what, Jed?"

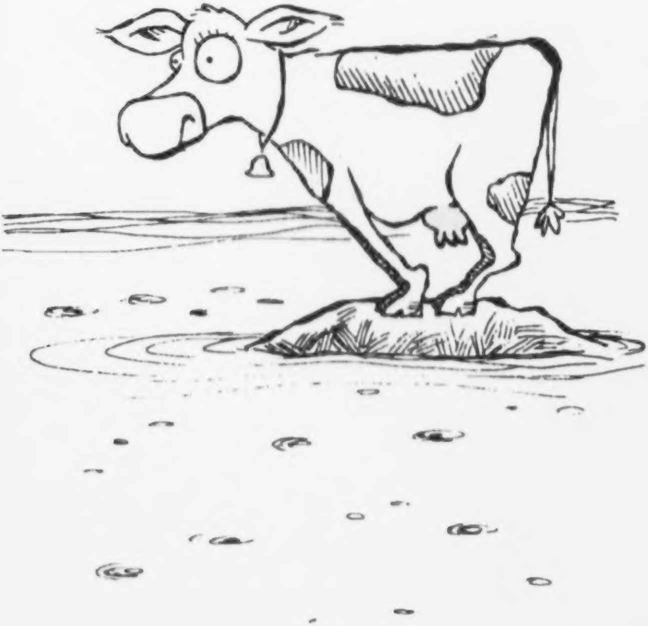
"For poling the boat. It's got no rudder, Cora. We'll be bashed to pieces. Grab a cane up front there. Now cut loose!"



The bean boat surged wildly forward. It twisted for a moment in a brown whirlpool, spun around, and caught on a snag. With his pole, Jed pushed the boat free again. "Watch that rock, Cora!"

Working on both sides, they pushed, pulled, and swatted along.

"Cow ahead!" Jed shouted. There on a narrow, flat rock, surrounded by water, a cow stood rigid with fear.



"Poor critter can't even lie down," Jed said. "Let's edge over careful, Cora. That rock may be jagged below."

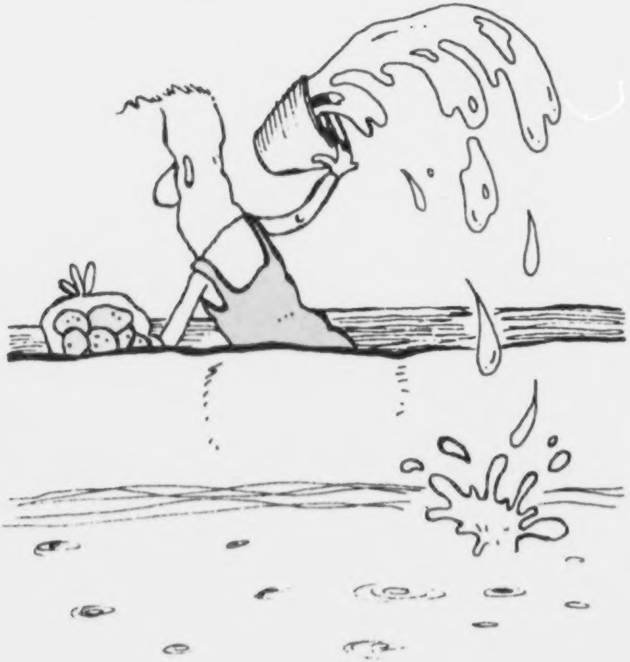
The boat swung sideways on a big wave, slapping against the rock.

"Come, Bossie, git," Cora demanded. "We got a use for you." The cow froze. The boat tossed.

"Steady the boat, Cora. If I can get her front hoofs in, the rear is bound to follow."

Cora eased the boat against the rock. Jed tugged at the cow. "Moooo," the cow protested, but Jed forced the stiff legs into the boat, and Bossie's rear followed just as the boat surged away from the rock and out again into the angry water.

"Water's leaking in, Cora! That cow stamped a hoof through the bottom of the boat." With one hand Jed scooped water out of the boat. With the other he tried fitting the potatoes into the leak.

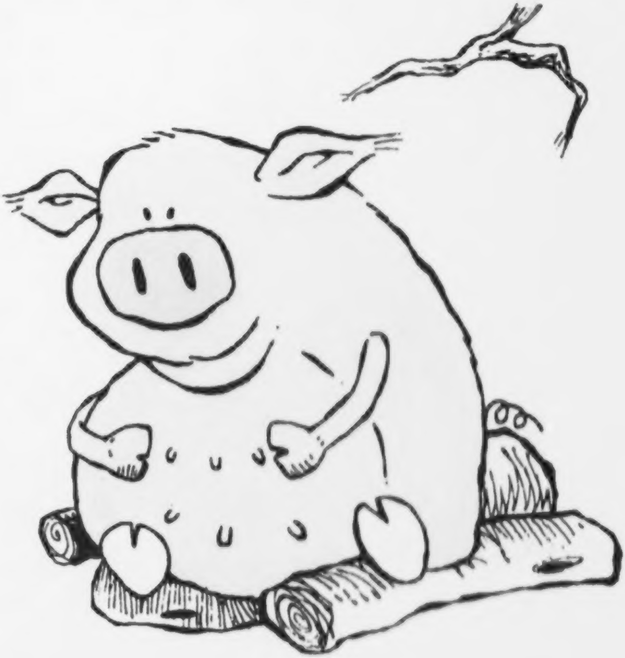


"Thank catfish! Here's one just the size to plug the hole. Cora, it's holding!"

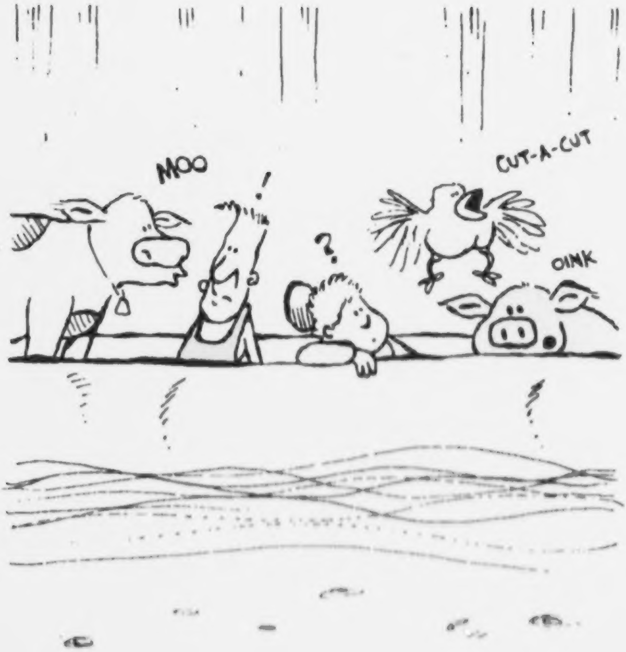
Again they fought to control the boat.

"What's in that tangle of branches and logs, Jed?"

Jed looked. Staring back at him was an enormous sow. "Great catfish, Cora. She's about to farrow and not a bed to rest in! We gotta save her."



The branches tore at the side of the boat. Cora and Jed turned it around and edged up to an opening between logs.



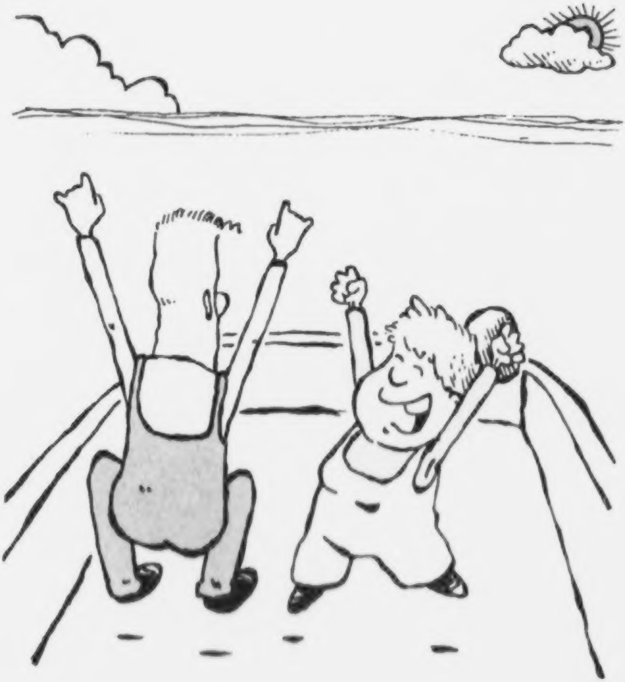
"Here, pig," Jed called. The cow bellowed. The chickens clucked.

"Sow," Cora pleaded, "think of your babies."

The sow raised her head and, with a crunching of branches, waddled up to the boat and stepped in heavily. The boat heaved.

"Moo," the cow complained. "Cut-a-cut," the chickens scolded.

"Quick, Jed, the branches are breaking apart!" They poled frantically to one side as logs shot forward.



At last, panting and tired, they reached a plain where the waters spread, losing their fury. The rain slowed.

"Dry land ahead!" Jed called.

"I knew we'd make it."

"Saved by your bean, Cora."

"Saved by your canes, Jed. Yup. Everything's got a use."

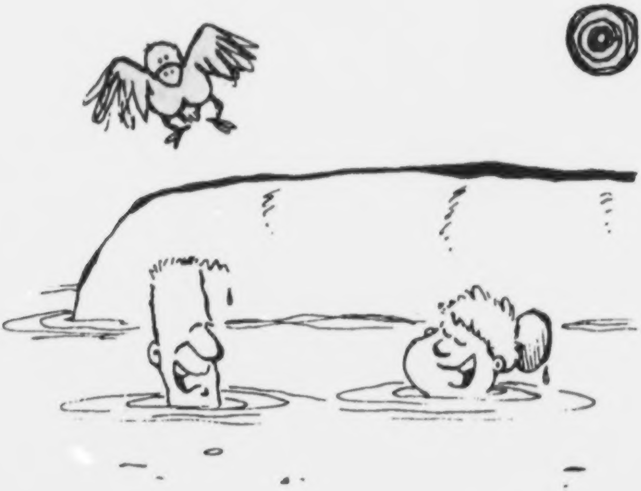
"If we never get back home, Cora, we got enough critters and potatoes to start over."

"Right! And the first thing we'll do, Jed..."

"Do," Jed yelled. "All you think of is do."

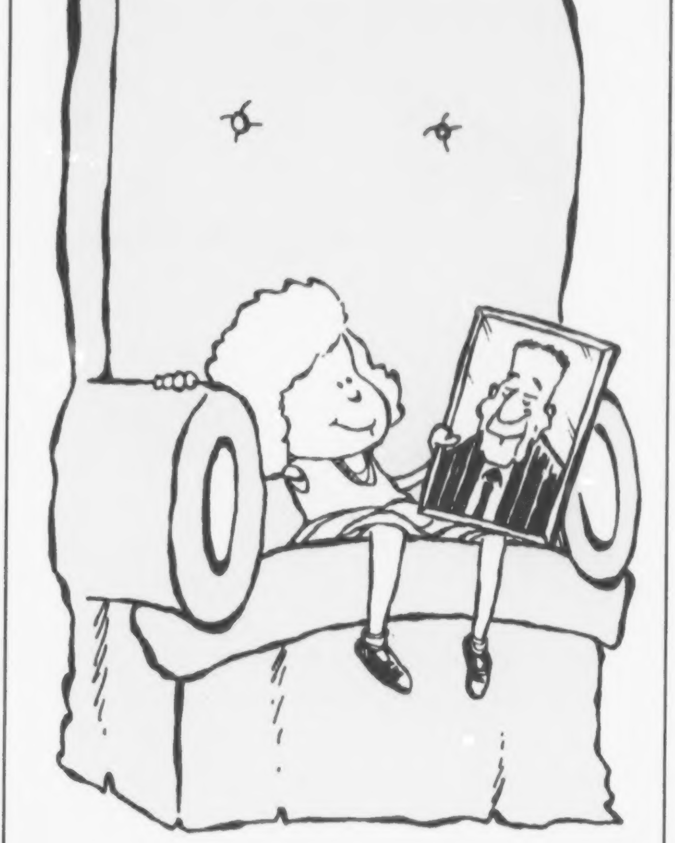
"What we're going to do," Cora sang, "is take a little bitty snooze 'neath the hickory tree, and zoom up zippy as can be."

The two of them sang and laughed so hard, they tipped the bean as they hit the shore.



Things to do after reading the story

Jed and Cora did not like each other until there was an emergency, and they decided to help one another. Try to think of a way you could help someone you do not like very well. What would you do to help this person?



Uncle Edgar and the President's Eye

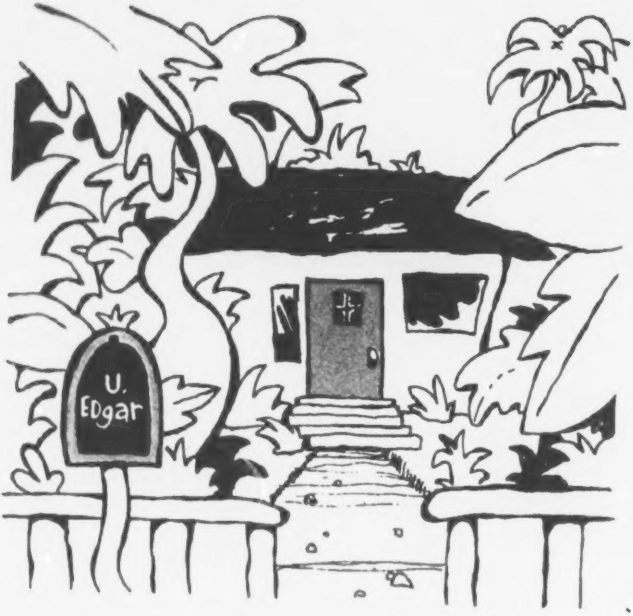
by Linda Allen

Things to do before reading the story

Sometimes your friends or relatives may tell interesting stories and share fun secrets. Talk together about a time when you told a story or secret to a friend or relative or listened to one.

Did I ever tell you about my uncle Edgar? He's Mom's uncle, really, so that makes him my great uncle Edgar, but I never call him that. He's very old—so old that he can remember a time when there were no such things as automobiles.

Mom says he exaggerates. She says he's a bad influence on me and if I listen to everything he says, I'll never be any good at history. But he ought to know if he helped design the first airship. And I don't care whether he was exaggerating or not when he told me that his mother came over from England on the Mayflower; the way he told it, it was a great story.



We go to visit every spring. He lives in a creaky old house with a big, wild garden around it, like a jungle. He says there are leopards in there. He says if I don't bother them, they won't bother me, so I don't. They have a lair underneath his shed, and that's where they go when they see me coming. Uncle Edgar feeds them spaghetti every night, but I can't watch because it's past my bedtime.

The last time we went visiting, he was looking for something. At first he wouldn't say what it was. He just kept opening drawers and banging them shut and muttering to himself. "Why don't you tell us what you've lost, Uncle Edgar?" Mom said.

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"Then we can help you look for it."

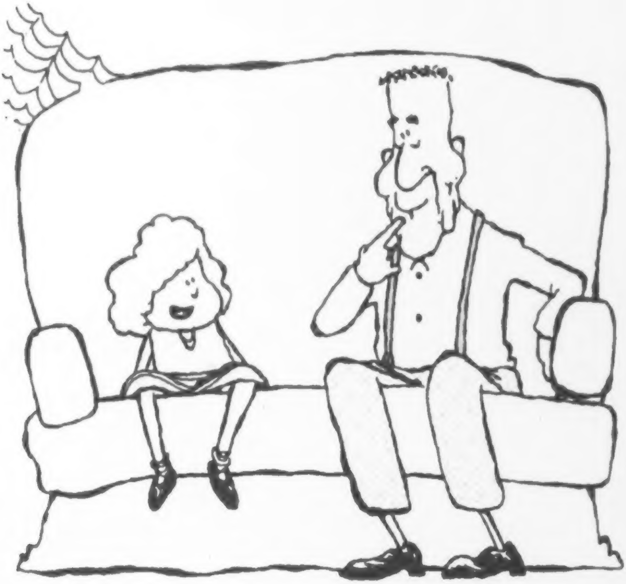
But he wouldn't. He said if he told her, she wouldn't believe him, so she went off to have her hair done.

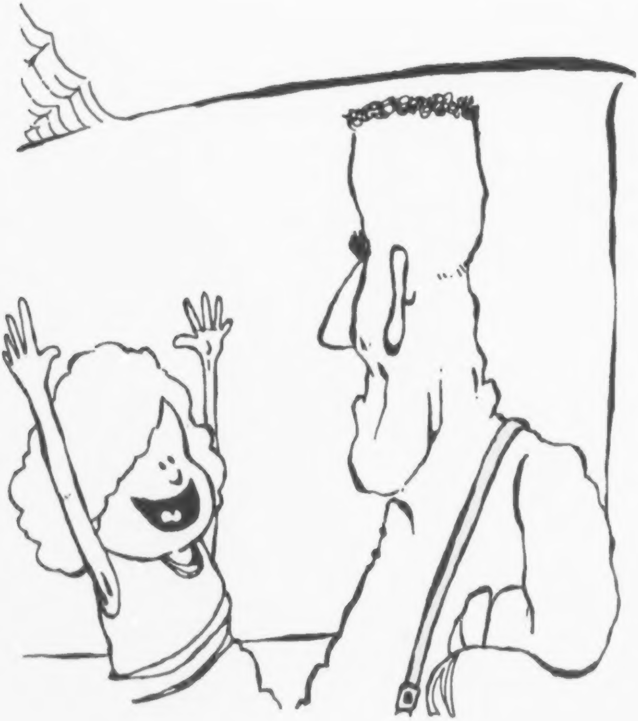
I watched him for a little while; then I said, "I'd believe you, Uncle Edgar."

"Would you?" he said.

"Yes, I would," I said.

"Well, I don't know. It isn't the sort of thing I'd like people to hear about. If it ever got out that it was in my possession, they'd all be around here—the FBI, newspaper reporters, TV interviewers, the lot."





“What is it?” I asked. I was getting excited. “It must be something special.”

“Oh, it’s special all right,” he said.

“Stolen jewels?” I asked.

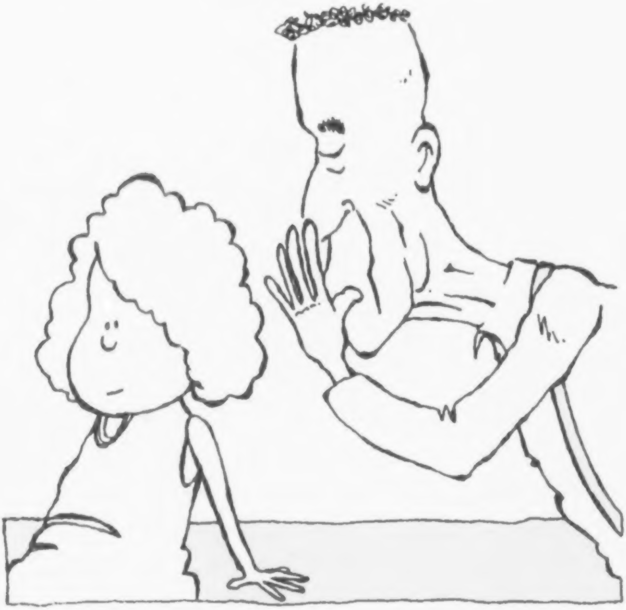
“Not this time,” he replied—and don’t ask me what he meant by that.

"Please," I begged, "let me help you look for it. I won't say a word to Mom."

"Promise?" he said.

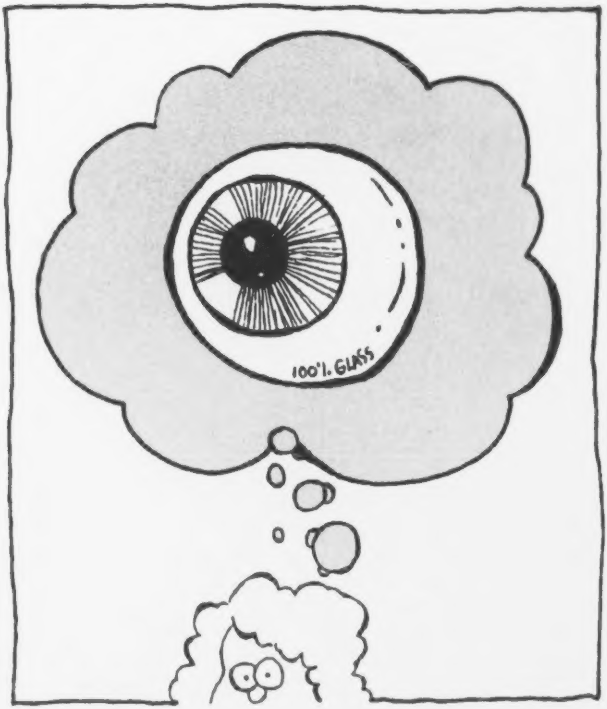
"Cross my heart and hope to die."

He bent forward and whispered, "It's something that belonged to the president."



"The President of the United States!" I yelled.

"Shh! Keep your voice down," he hissed. Then he told me what it was.



“It’s a glass eye. A blue one. People with only one eye used to wear them—maybe they still do.”

“I didn’t know the president had only one eye,” I said. “He looks all right to me.”

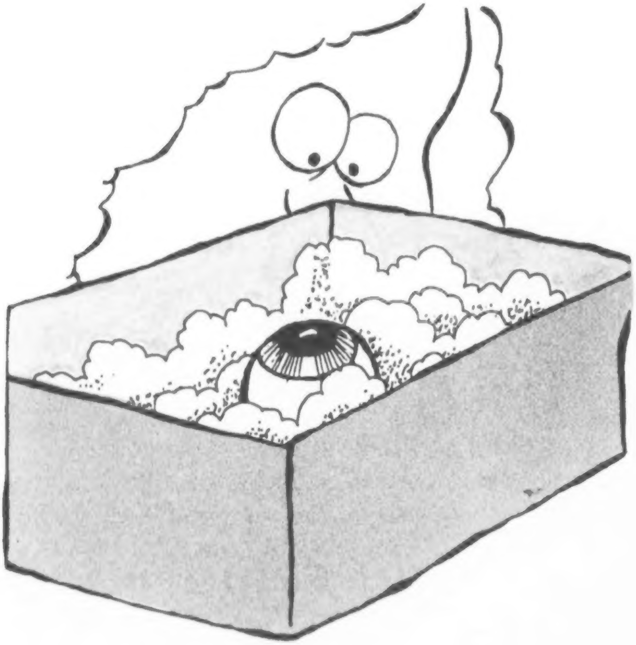
“Not this president. Way back, nine or ten presidents ago.”

“Which one was it?”

“I’m not at liberty to say.”

And then I knew it was going to be an interesting story. I'd never been told at school that one of our presidents had a glass eye, but that just goes to show that teachers don't know everything. We searched in all the drawers downstairs and then went upstairs where we found all sorts of wonderful things, like the fossilized egg of the extinct Goozlebird and some lace that had belonged to Marie Antoinette.

Finally we found the glass eye. It was in a box, wrapped in cotton. I stared and stared at the eye, and it stared right back at me. It looked so real that I expected it to wink. I asked Uncle Edgar how he came to have it.

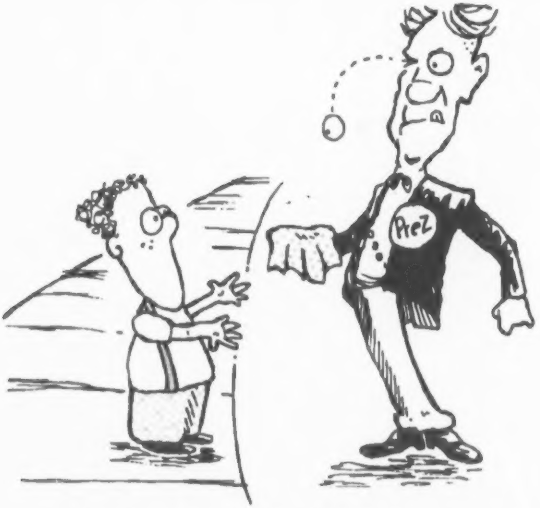


"Hush," he said, tucking it into his waistcoat pocket. "Not here. There might be hidden microphones, considering the life I've led.

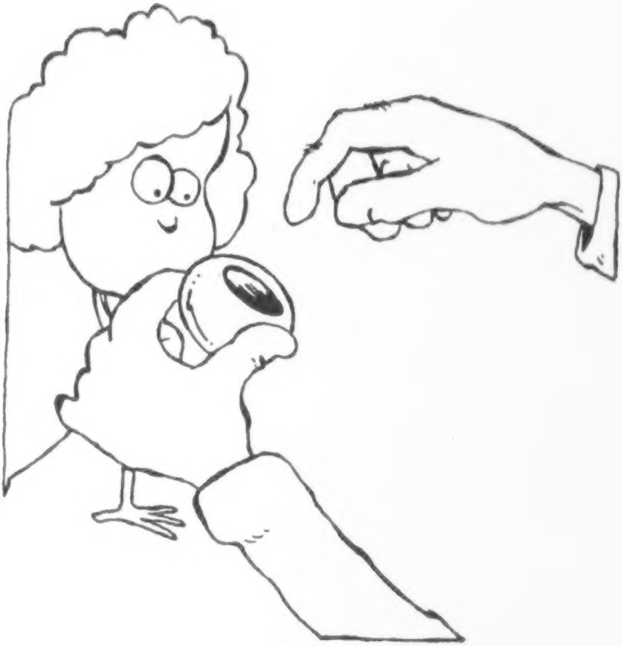
Let's go to the park, and I'll tell you all about it."

We found a bench where it was quiet, and he began his story. When he was about my age, he said, he happened to be at a big railway station when the president was passing through. The president had a bodyguard with him, and just as they were passing the spot where Uncle Edgar was standing, a spark from the engine flew into the bodyguard's eye, nearly blinding him.

Uncle Edgar saw the president glance along the platform, where two big, ugly men were approaching. Immediately, the president turned to Uncle Edgar, and that was when my uncle noticed that he had a glass eye. In a flash the president blinked out the eye and wrapped it in a handkerchief. "Quick!" he said to Uncle Edgar. "Take this to SID. Hurry, those two men mustn't get hold of it!"



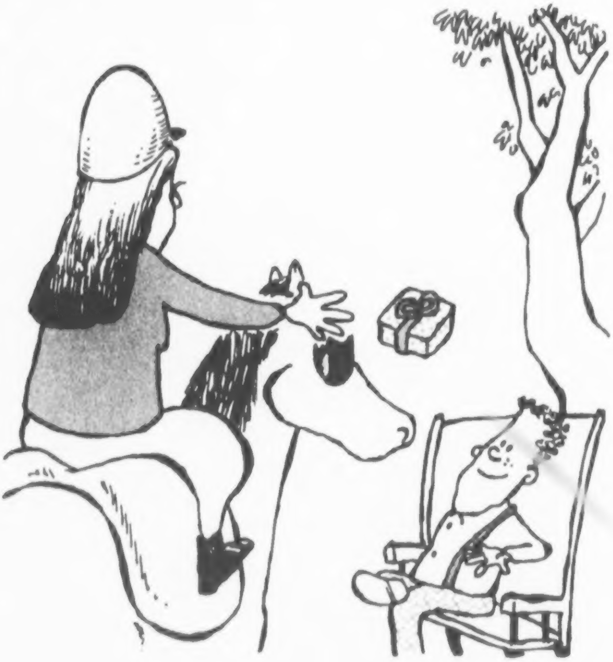
Well, at once uncle Edgar knew that SID stood for Special Intelligence Department, so he ran off as fast as he could. He was the best runner in his school in those days and he had no difficulty in shaking the two men off. When he got to the Special Intelligence Department, he was taken to an office deep underground where a beautiful lady asked him questions and gave him a drink of lemonade.



Uncle Edgar took the glass eye out of his pocket and showed it to me. "You see the hollow in the back?" he said. "That's where the president's secret code was kept. Nobody knew about it except himself, the beautiful lady, and me. It was all written down on a tiny disk that the lady put under a microscope to read. She swore me to secrecy and told me to go home and behave as if nothing had happened." Uncle Edgar looked me straight in the eye and went on, "And from that day to this, I've never breathed a word of it."

"But why did she let you keep the eye?" I asked. "Didn't the president want it any more?"

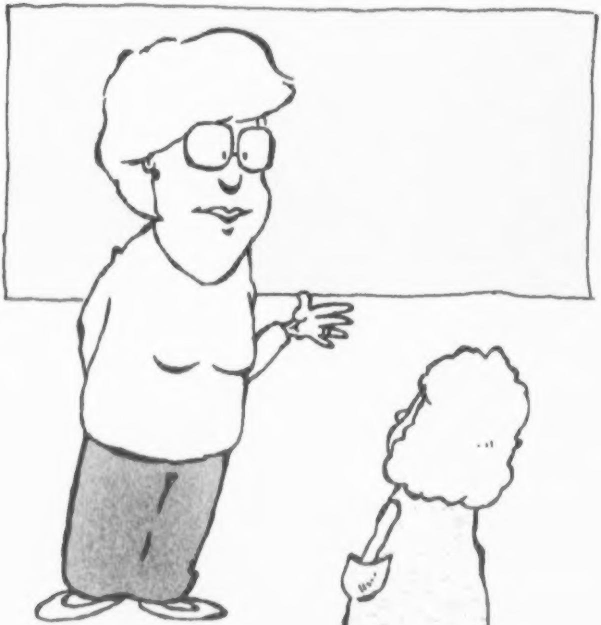
"Ah, yes," he said, "that's what I'm coming to. She didn't let me keep it—not then. It was some time afterward. I was sitting on a bench in the park—it might have been this very bench, yes, I do believe it was—when I saw the beautiful lady again. As she approached me, she reined in her horse—his name was Vulcan—and threw a little package into my hands. 'With the president's compliments,' she said. 'He wants you to have this as a memento of the day on which you gave him such valuable assistance. He has several more, so nobody will ever know. Good-bye, my friend. We shall never forget what you did.' And, of course it was the president's eye."



"Wow!" I said. But what happened next really left me speechless.

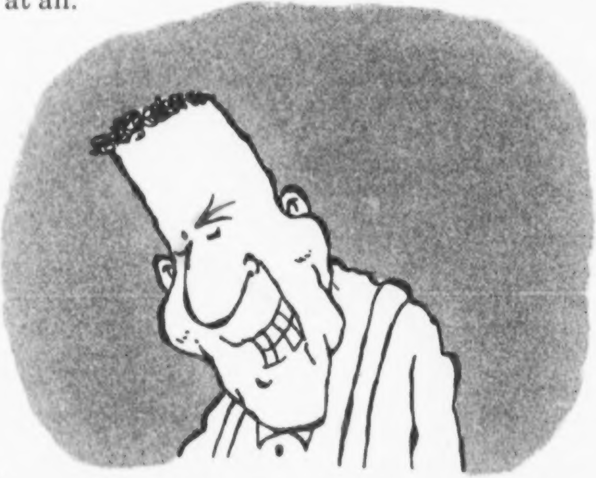
Uncle Edgar placed the glass eye in my hand. It was a very solemn moment. "I'm getting old," he said, "and who knows what might happen after I'm gone? I'd like you to have it, for my sake."

I'd just put it carefully away in my pocket when Mom came by on her way back from the hairdresser. "Did you find what you were looking for?" she asked Uncle Edgar.



"Oh, yes," he replied with a significant glance at me, "but it was nothing important, was it?"

"No, not really," I said, "Nothing important at all."



Things to do after reading the story

Do you know someone like Uncle Edgar? What are they like? do they sometimes exaggerate or make up stories? Talk about a time when your mom or dad told you they didn't want you to spend time with someone. Do you understand from reading this story why your parent decided this? Explain.

We hope you have had fun with these stories!

Books of Special Interest to Parents

How Can I Prepare My Young Child for Reading? by Paula C. Grinnell. Presents ideas to assist parents in preparing their children for reading. Focuses on children from birth through kindergarten. ($1.75)

You Can Help Your Young Child with Writing, by Marcia Baghban. Suggests methods parents can use to help develop their children's writing at home. Offers writing and reading activities. ($1.75)

Beginning Literacy and Your Child, by Steven B. Silvern and Linda R. Silvern. Recommends ways parents can participate in the development of their children's literacy. Provides activities for talking, reading, writing, and listening, ($1.75)

Helping Your Child Become a Reader, by Nancy L. Roser. Provides suggestions for parents to help them encourage their children to read. Offers several practical activities for parents. ($1.75)

Creating Readers and Writers, by Susan Mandel Glazer. Suggests that parents: (1) encourage the use of language; (2) build positive attitudes toward reading, writing, and speaking; and (3) demonstrate the purposes of literacy. Includes book suggestions classified by age groups. ($1.75)

You Can Encourage Your High School Student to Read, by Jamie Myers. Offers practical ideas parents can use to encourage their teenagers to read more. Shows how reading can serve adolescents' needs, and presents future needs that reading can fulfill. ($1.75)

Your Child's Vision Is Important, by Caroline Beverstock. Discusses how vision affects school work, how different eye problems affect vision, and how to spot vision problems. Includes suggestions for dealing with vision difficulties. ($1.75)

101 Ideas to Help Your Child Learn to Read and Write, by Mary and Richard Behm. Ideas are presented to help parents use resources from around the home to promote literacy. The activities are educationally sound and fun for the parent and child to do together. ($6.50)

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Lee and Marlene Canter's *Parents on Your Side* can help teachers become more successful by showing them "how to get the support [they] need from parents—all kinds of parents." The book accomplishes this task by giving teachers practical advice on developing attitudes that gain parental support, recognizing roadblocks to communication with parents, establishing first-day-of school parent contact objectives, and a host of other techniques. The book's clear format and lively writing style make it especially appealing to teachers who wish to avoid the dry, "academic" style of many self-help books for teachers.

The Canters provide samples of family newsletters, homework calendars to be sent home with students, home-school contracts, and other items that can assist in developing effective parent/teacher rapport. These documents provide parents with consistent feedback and a clear concept of their relationship with their child's school life. A large spectrum of parent- and student-related issues is addressed in *Parents on Your Side*, and the book's message is especially appropriate for teachers who wish to bring more structure into their dealings with families.

To quote the authors, the book "is a step-by-step involvement program that teaches skills for gaining parental support from the first day of school to the last." As such, it stresses teacher attitudes and communication skills as the foundation for improving students' academic performance, reducing their own stress and discipline problems, and generally creating a more upbeat and smoothly running classroom through enhanced parent/student/teacher interaction.

Available from Lee Canter & Associates, P.O. Box 2113, Santa Monica, CA 90407-2113.

Submissions Policy for Stories and Articles for Parents and Children Together

Stories for Children and Parents:

1. Make the story fun for children—your primary audience. The adult reading along will enjoy the story if the child does.
2. Make sure that your story is acceptable to parents. We do not want parents to reject the story because it is inappropriate for their children. Writing a story of interest to children and at the same time pleasing to parents is a big challenge.
3. Your story should be no longer than eight double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.
4. Correct grammar and syntax are important. For the most part we choose to model correct standard English.
5. Be careful about the vocabulary you use in your story. Rule out really long and difficult-to-pronounce words. Use "plain" English, when you can—words that have English roots rather than French or Latin ones.
6. Make your stories gender inclusive. Do not use sexist terminology or ideas. Our stories must be interesting to both boys and girls.
7. You may illustrate your own story, but they must be line drawings in pen and ink only. The drawings must be able to be scanned, so too much detail will not work.

Articles for Parents:

1. Articles should contain practical information and helpful strategies. Anecdotes and other experiences modeling useful learning methods are particularly desirable.
2. Your article should be no longer than four double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.

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August 1991

Parents and Children Together

Beginning the New School Year

Read-along Stories:

The Lion and the Mouse
The Butterfly Lovers
Grandma's Great Escape

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This booklet has a companion audio tape on "Beginning the New School Year." Occasionally there are directions on the tape that do not appear in the booklet or headings in the booklet that aren't spoken on the tape.

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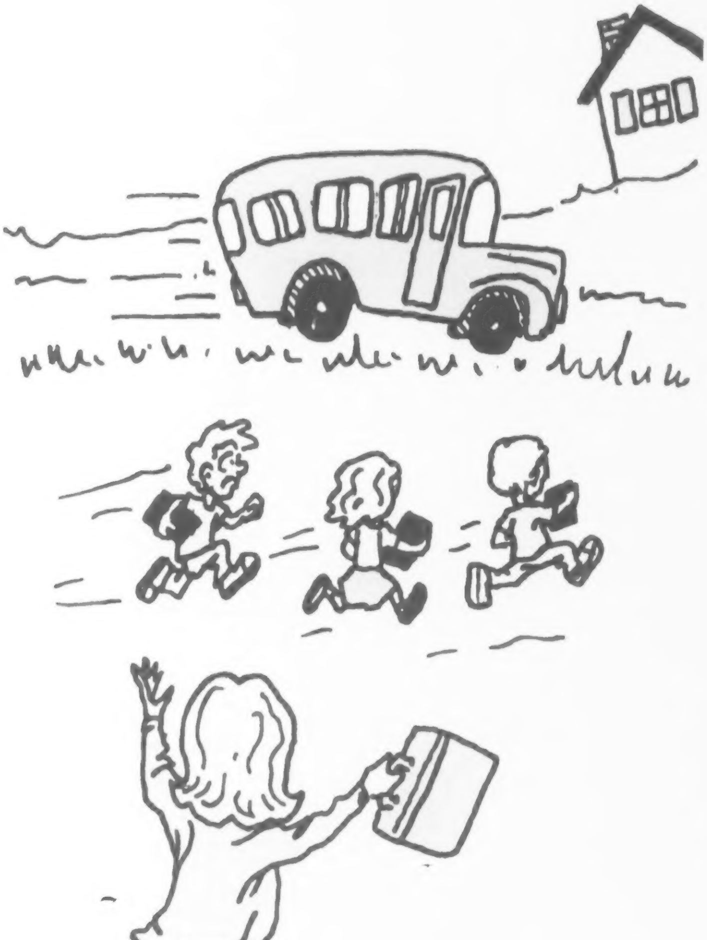
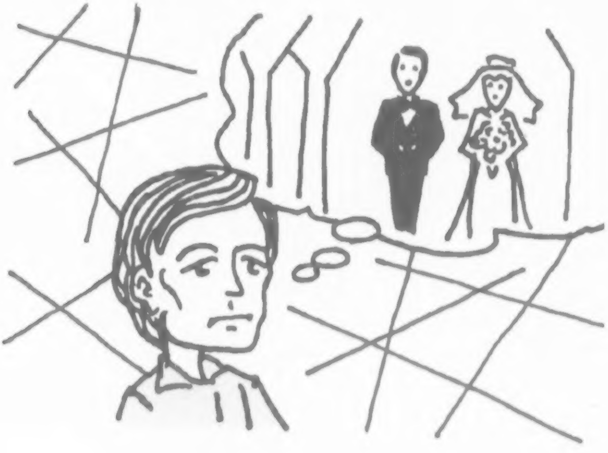


Welcome to this issue of *Parents and Children Together.* In this issue we focus on the start of the new school year and how parents can help their children through this hectic time.

On side B of the tape (and in the second half of the booklet) we have three read-along stories. We encourage you to listen to these stories and to read them with your children, so that they can participate in the excitement of story reading. Of course, your child can also listen to the stories alone, if you wish.

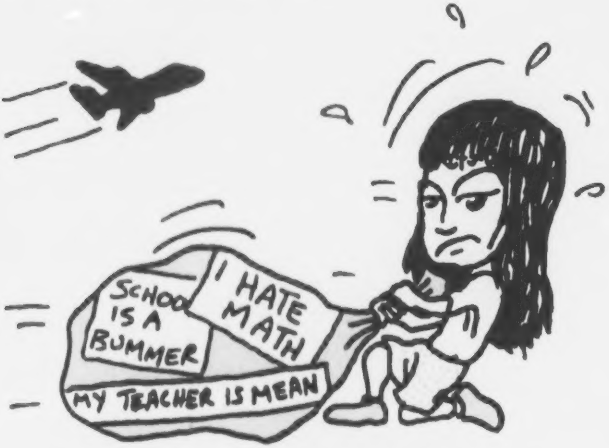
Do you remember the movie, "Back to the Future"? It was the story of a boy who could transport himself back to the time when his parents were teenagers. This sounds like a great adventure, but the boy also realized that his actions in this other time dimension could change him and his family in the present—that is, in the future. All of a sudden, the high school dates and love affairs of his parents took on great importance. "What if my Mom didn't marry my Dad? I wouldn't be here at all!" Sobering thought, isn't it?



In a way, each year as we start back to school we are setting up the future. What kind of education your children will get now, greatly affects their future. Nothing we can do for them influences their future jobs or their potential growth more than their education. Our attitudes about school and our choices about their schooling will help or hinder them for decades. That's why it pays to think seriously about how to begin a new school year.

A year ago, I visited a first grade class at the end of September, only a month after school had started. One little boy was trying to read a brightly colored book and seemed to be satisfied with himself. "You are in a good school," I said to him. "Are you enjoying yourself?"

"Oh," he looked up at me and said, "I like it a little, but I still hate it a lot."



Even though I chuckled at his reply, it reminded me of all the negative baggage some children carry with them to school. Here was a six-year-old boy working on his own and doing well, but he still felt he was required to say that he did not like school. Even in the first grade, he felt he had to reassure me that he was normal and still hated school a lot. That attitude came from his home or his neighborhood, not from his experience in school.

Home Attitudes Come to School

We, as parents, can do much to give our children a positive attitude about school. We have such high hopes for our children. These "high-apple-pie-in-the-sky hopes" will help us to pass along the right attitude about school to our children. Your child needs to know you expect her to do well in school. However, it is just as important for her to know that you see school as a place not only to learn, but also to have fun and to experience life.

What is really important about beginning the school year with a good attitude, is passing along positive ideas for your child to think about.

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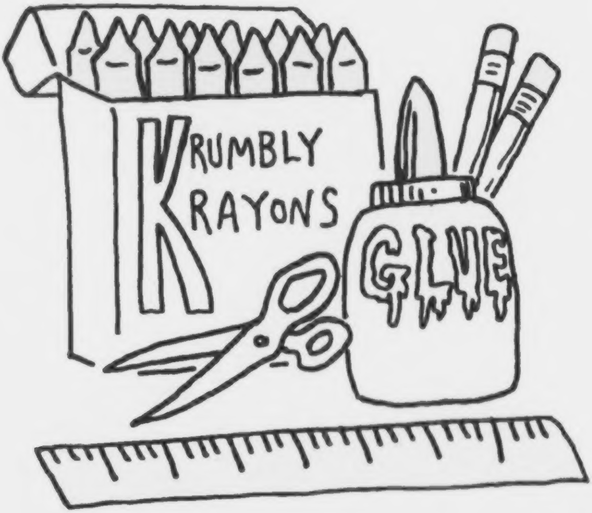
We want our children to be revved up and ready to start the year. Talk about school in a positive way. Some of the things we can say to them are:

> Think about the new books you'll get to read this year.

> I wonder if you will get to go on a field trip. I remember when I went on a field trip to . . .
>
> I bet you will make some new friends in your class.

There are many fun games you get to play in school.

Think about all the new experiences and fun you will have.

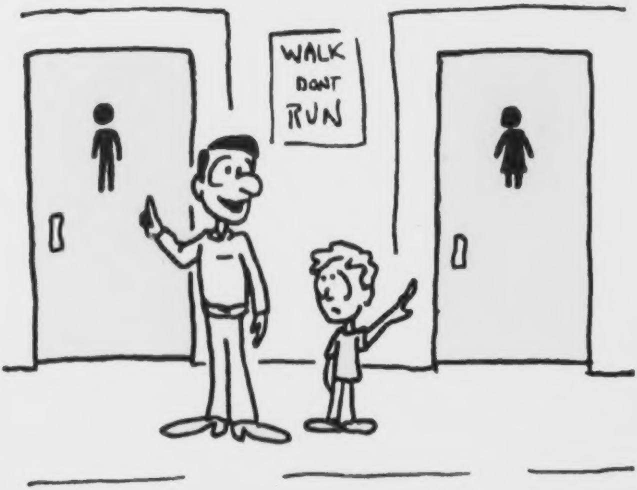


You might even show your children that you envy them. Tell them how you remember starting school with that fresh box of crayons and new shoes. For now, during these early years of their schooling, make sure you pass along the attitude that learning is fun.

Communicating Means Listening

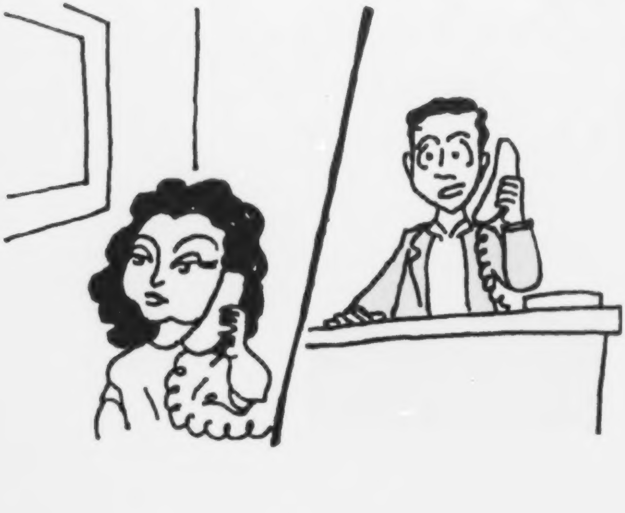
It is important that you talk about school in a positive way, and reassure your child that he can succeed in school. But there is more to getting your child ready for school than communicating the right attitude to him. Good communication also means listening to your child.

What are the fears and problems that your child faces? If her fears stem from a lack of familiarity with the school, take your child to school; walk around the building to locate the office, rest rooms, gym, counselor's office, and so on. Talk to the secretary, principal, custodian, and teachers, who are usually there the week before school starts. If possible, introduce your child to these people, and talk for a few minutes.



Explain to her how each of the people at school can help if she has a problem. Such an approach not only shows school personnel that you are interested; it tells your child that you take her feelings seriously.

As the school year moves forward, keep listening. Don't hesitate to call the teacher or principal if there are questions or problems to be worked out. Your enthusiasm for your child's success and your willingness to help him solve problems in a cooperative way communicates an important attitude. It says that school is important; that you expect your child to learn and to make progress; and that you, your child, and school personnel can work together to solve problems.

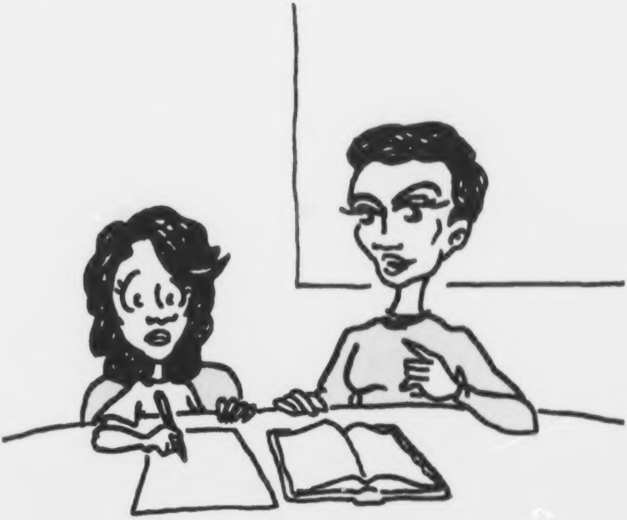


A Responsible Parent

The relationship between home and school needs to be re-established from time to time. The beginning of a school year is a good time to build that connection. We expect the school to act responsibly toward our children; the school expects us to act responsibly as well. Our children look to both home and school for security and a sense of direction in how to succeed in school.

Since we want our children to learn well and to grow while in school, we often have to act like cheerleaders for them. We praise them when they are doing well (Go! Go! Go!), and give them courage when the game gets tough (Hold that line! Hold that line!). That's the role of a cheerleader— to stand by and to shout encouragement, no matter how the game is going. Our children need that kind of support throughout their schooling. As par-

ents, we set expectations for school success and then cheer our children on as they struggle to achieve those expectations. But we must remember that the child's interests and expectations are just as important, if not more important, than our own. Thus we have to be realistic in our expectations, and remain sensitive at all times to our children's needs.



We can help our children learn and be successful in school by acknowledging their accomplishments and by helping them during homework. We can answer and raise questions that will stimulate their thinking. We should not do their assignments for them, but should always show our interest in their work and provide them with a good work space at home.

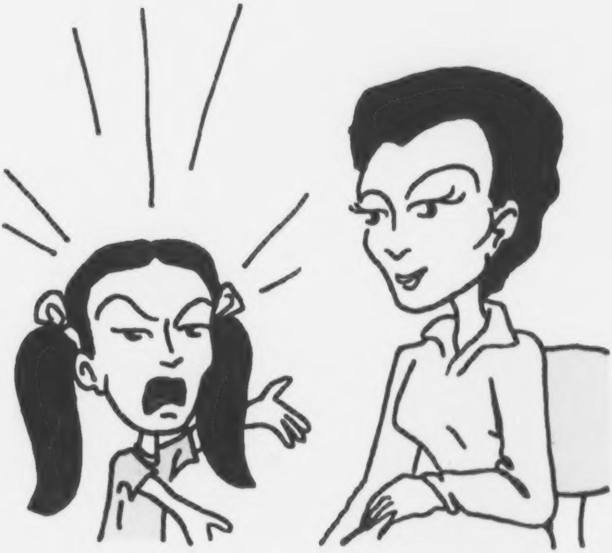
Most importantly, we need to listen to our children instead of just talking at them. The best way we can show that we are listening is to take action when they send out a cry for help. It is our responsibility to arrange for the problem to be solved. Usually that means that our children have to do something, too—go to the library, finish an assignment, contact their teacher, keep an organized notebook, and so on. Sometimes it means that we have to get them books or take them to the library. Other times it means that we have to call the teacher or the school to discuss a plan to help our children move forward.

Our enthusiasm and willingness to communicate will go a long way toward making the beginning of a school year a good experience for everyone.

We would like to address a few problems concerning children starting school. We offer some suggestions to help make the beginning of your child's school year run more smoothly.

My daughter is not looking forward to starting school this year. She doesn't want to be in her new teacher's class. I am afraid that this dislike may affect her school success. How can we handle this?

Sooner or later, every child encounters a teacher she doesn't like. Helping your daughter to cope with this situation, and possibly to gain from it, is a productive way you can participate in her schooling.



Encourage your daughter to talk about what she's feeling. Listen carefully, and reflect what you hear. It's helpful to say things to your daughter like, "You sound like you were embarrassed," or "That must have made you feel bad." Then try to get your child to talk to her teacher, especially about things she doesn't understand. When a problem arises between them, encourage your daughter to talk with her teacher, to express her feelings. Maybe she and her teacher can work out some solutions.

Explain to your child that it's possible to learn to like someone, but she has to work at it. And learning to make the best of a less-than-perfect situation is an important life skill.

We are moving to a new community and our oldest child will be starting school. How can I learn about the school he will be attending?

Call or write the principal to make an appointment to visit the school. If it is possible, try to meet your child's teacher and visit that classroom while you are visiting the school. Talk with other parents and children about their experiences at your child's school.

When registering for school, make sure you pick up a school calendar, a list of the school's policies and rules, and a roster of teachers' names and important school phone numbers. Learn the names of all teachers who will be working with your child. Pay close attention to the school rules regarding clothing, money, supplies, and the like. Become familiar with the school calendar — know which days your child will be in or out of school and mark your home and work calendars. Learn the school and bus schedules in advance, so that everything will go smoothly.

SCHOOL CALENDAR
RULES
FACULTY

Later, when your child brings home the school newsletter, take time to read it. Attend school events, especially open houses and PTA meetings.

Many teachers make requests at the beginning of the year for parents to volunteer their time in various ways. Some parents have opportunities to help out in classrooms, serve as chaperons for field trips, provide treats for school parties, offer their artistic talents, or become speakers on special class topics. You may want to volunteer to do some of these things in your child's classroom. It's a good way to learn more about your child's school and to become more involved with your child's education.

The better you know the school and teachers, the better you can be an important part of your child's education team.

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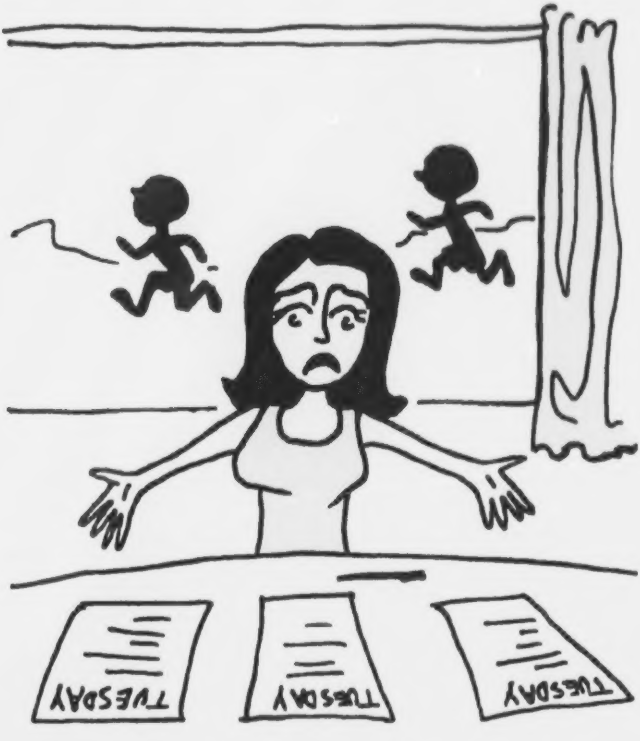
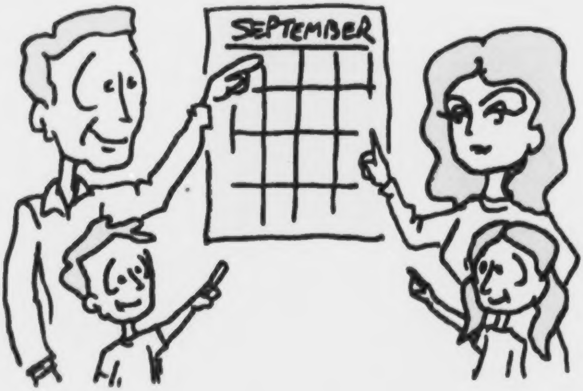
I am a working mother and, once school begins, I feel that school activities dominate our time. Trying to organize three schedules — work, home, and school — I feel like I don't have any time to devote just to my children.



You can't change the quantity of time you have, but you can change the way you spend it. You might try writing down how you've spent your time during the past few days — hour by hour. Does the way you spend your time reflect your priorities? How much was spent with your children?

It may be necessary for you to make a plan now for using your time in the week ahead. Have your children write down—perhaps on a weekly calendar—practice times for volleyball, basketball, or other events they participate in, their work schedules if they have after school jobs, and other appointments and activities that are regular commitments for your family. Include your activities and appointments also. This family calendar or written plan lets you see where you have blocks of time to spend with your children.

Arrange your family schedule so children have time for homework, studying, and household responsibilities, as well as for play and recreational activities. It is important that everyone in your family help to organize this schedule so that all family members can share the responsibility for carrying it out. Check to see how you did at the end of the week. You may need to make adjustments when schedules change from week to week.



Don't be too hard on yourself. Remember that driving kids to and from school, practices, and other activities, or doing the grocery shopping with them can be time that is just as valuable as the time you spend together watching TV. Working cooperatively to fulfill home and school responsibilities encourages children to take greater personal responsibility for the quality of family life. More importantly, it is making the most of the time that you are together. We do what we think is important. Deciding what is important can be the first step in making time count.

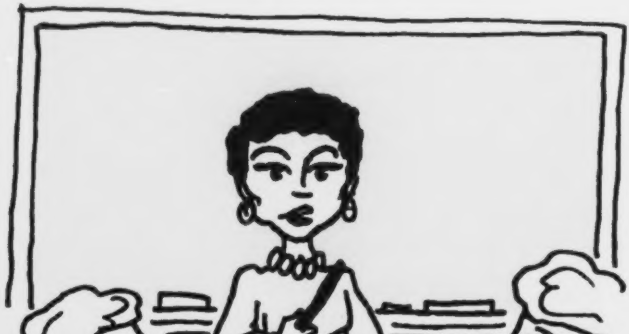
If you have questions you want answered about going back to school, please write to us, and we will try to answer them for you. You may find your question in another issue of *Parents and Children Together.*

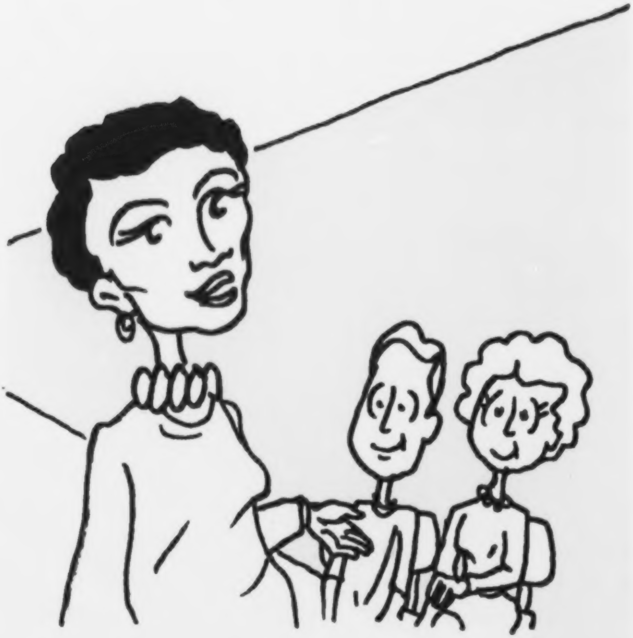
Write to:

Editor, Parents and Children Together
Indiana University
2805 E. 10th Street, Suite 150
Bloomington, IN 47408-2698

Earlene Holland, Director of Elementary Education in Vincennes, Indiana, sent us this story about a mother who discovered the benefits of reading aloud to her children.

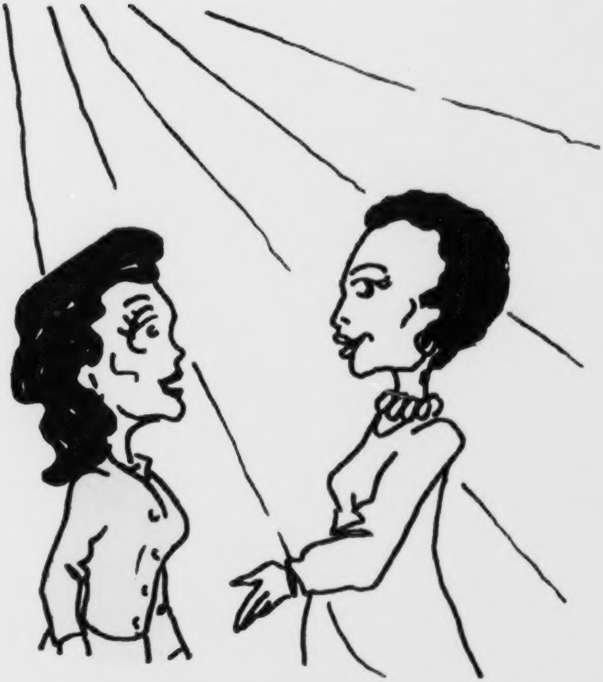
During my eleven years as an elementary school principal, I met each spring with the parents of children who had been through our prekindergarten screening. This was always an anxious time for parents because, naturally, they were hoping to hear the good news that their child was ready for kindergarten.





I always talked to parents about the importance of reading to their children because I kept track of the success of children whose parents read to them regularly and those who did not. I found that children who had been read to regularly did better in the first grade than those whose parents had not read to them.

As I recall the experiences I have had in talking with hundreds of parents during these conferences, I remember one particularly well. I kept track of this family because I was impressed with the obvious change of attitude in both parents and children.

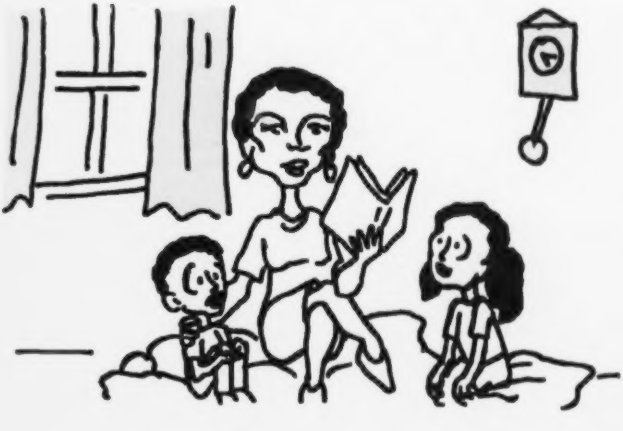


The mother worked as a waitress and had four children, aged 11, 8, 5, and 3. I came to the school as principal when the two older boys were ten and seven and noticed that they didn't like reading. Both were in the below-average reading group in their classes; each had the ability to do better.

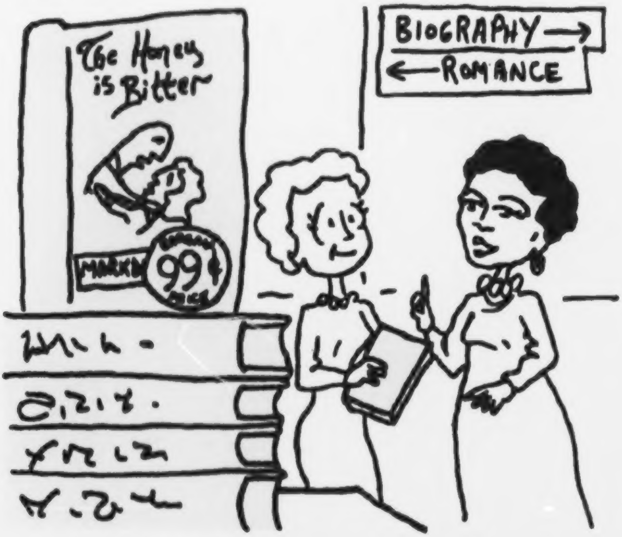
I asked the mother if she read to the two boys and to her younger children. She said that she didn't have time to do so because of her long working hours. She also made a point of telling me that her mother didn't read to her either, and that she herself didn't like to read.

After I described my experiences as a first grade teacher, I could see a flicker of interest in her. I spoke of my own busy teaching schedule, and the fact that I went to night school, did my own housework, and worked part-time in the family business, but still found a way to work in fifteen minutes each day to read to my own children. I included all of them even though they varied in age. Sometimes we would read books geared to the older children's interests and sometimes those more appropriate for the younger ones, but the older ones still enjoyed the books for little kids.

We usually read each evening right after supper or before bedtime, depending on the evening homework and other activities. But reading was definitely part of our daily routine. My children have their own children now, but they still talk about our daily reading periods. They feel that these experiences have made it easier for them to read to their children, no matter how busy they are.



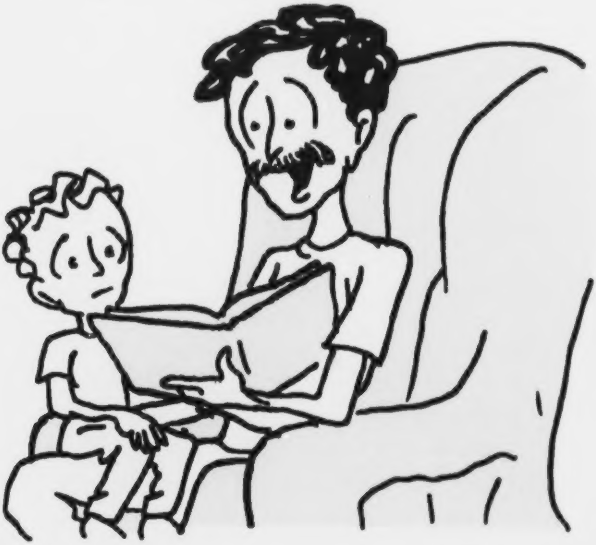
I explained all of this and told this frustrated mother that her child might have a hard time in kindergarten because he didn't have a rich language background. I also mentioned that such a background is developed by parents reading to their children, taking them places, and talking with them about all kinds of things. Then I offered to help her obtain books through our school summer library program and the public library. We also found some children's books in a nearby used bookstore.



I didn't see her again until October. She was just thrilled. She talked on and on about how much she herself enjoyed reading. She had read several library books herself by this time. She felt she and her children had developed a closeness that she had never felt with her own mother.

She told me that she had been organizing her time better so that reading with her children, and taking a few minutes before bedtime for her own reading, had become a part of her daily routine. She admitted that this precious time spent with her children had given her a more positive outlook toward family life and its burdens.

The following May I checked on the children's grades and noticed a slight improvement. All three of their teachers said they had noticed changed attitudes and improved self-confidence in the children. The little three-year-old is now in second grade, and is the first child in that family who started school with a visible love of reading and a desire to learn. He continues to do well and even has his dad reading to him sometimes.



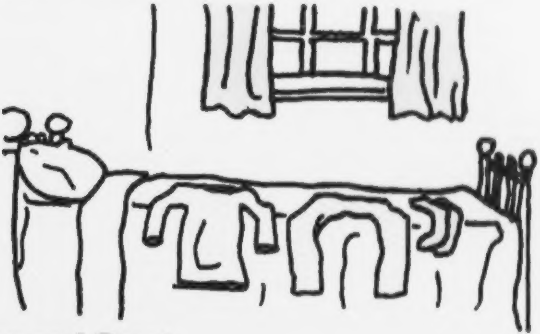
We parents often wonder if we're doing the right thing for our children. I can tell you this: read to your children and listen to them read to you, and you'll never go wrong. Reading can be excellent therapy for a stressful day, and a relaxing and fun thing that your children will always remember.

Activities for Preparing for School

Use some of the following activities to help your child get ready for school.

Get Ready, Get Set, Go.....

A few days prior to the first day of school, set up a trial run. Practice the morning routine by having clothes ready, preparing and eating breakfast, timing the walk to school or the bus stop, and organizing backpacks and lunch boxes. This will eliminate some of the chaos when the first morning arrives.



Shop and Treat

Plan a shopping trip to pick up those necessary back-to-school items before school begins. Try to make it a special day by stopping for a treat or spending some time at a local park.

Check It Out

Make a point to visit the school with your child before the fall session begins. Usually the teachers are there the week prior to school's opening. Meet your child's teacher and take some time to look around the school building and grounds; this will help your child feel more at ease about the new year.

Rise and Shine

Schedules usually change over the summer break. Children go to bed later and get up later. As school draws near, try making bedtime and wake-up time a little earlier each day. This way there will not be such a drastic change that your child's body must adjust to suddenly when school starts.

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Brain Boosters

Help your child get ready for the beginning of school by reviewing what she learned the previous year. Spend time reading, writing, and practicing math. This will refresh your youngster's mind and give her confidence.

Books for Parents and Children

On pages 32–40, we have put together lists of books for parents and children. Several of the books are about beginning school and the activities that occur in school. We encourage you to take time to read a few of these books with your child, and talk about some of the characters in the stories.

At the beginning of this issue, we mentioned that Side B of the audio tape contains three stories that are designed to be read-along stories. You may want to take some time to look ahead at these stories before you read along with your child. It is also important to talk about the story ahead of time.

Before reading the story, talk about the title or things that might happen in the story. Then, after the story is finished, talk about it again. By the way, if in the middle of the story something funny or interesting happens, it's O.K. to stop the tape and discuss the event, or ask your child questions such as "Do you have a nickname at school? Mine was Freckles." or "Would you like to live in a jungle?" and then follow it up with a why or why not. These questions make your conversation about the story more natural and more valuable.

When you and your child are ready, turn the tape to Side B and listen to the stories as you read along together, or you may read the stories aloud while your child reads along in the booklet.

Books for Parents

The Elementary School Handbook, by Joanne Oppenheim. Covers various aspects of elementary school. Topics include choosing a school; dealing with school authorities; and evaluating your child's reading, math, writing, and science programs. Provides practical ideas for parents to use at home to enrich their child's education.

The National PTA Talks to Parents, by Melitta J. Cutright. Deals with kindergarten preparation, homework, tests, math, reading, sex-education, drugs, alcohol, school reform, gifted children, and underachieving children. Offers practical advice for helping children succeed in school.

How to Help Your Child Get the Most Out of School, by Stella Chess. Discusses daycare, preschool, testing, competition, language impairment, guidance teachers, and special education. Presents practical suggestions on evaluating a child's performance and dealing with specific problems that may occur.

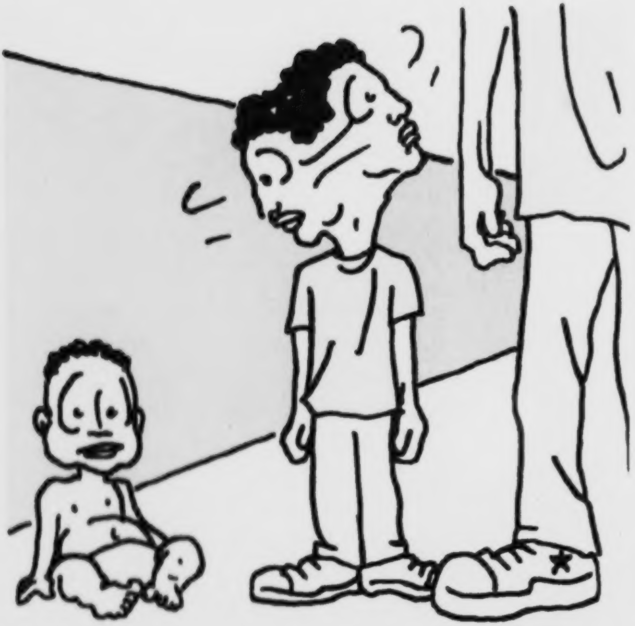
Between Parent and School, by Murray Kappelman and Paul Ackerman. Deals with a broad range of situations and problems that affect the lives of children in school. Shows parents how to help professionals within the school system give their child the best education possible. Examines the public school system and looks at the roles of the educators within the system.

Books To Read Together

Ages 4-6

Dog Goes to Nursery School, by Lucille Hammond. Dog does not want to go to nursery school; he would rather stay home and play. After spending the morning at school, he discovers he can have as much fun there as he does at home.

The Berenstain Bears Go to School, by Stan and Jan Berenstain. Sister Bear is nervous about starting kindergarten. She spends the day at school, and decides it is fun. She meets another cub who is scared about school and helps him to be brave.



Fred's First Day, by Cathy Warren. Fred is too big to play with his baby brother, and too young to play with his older brother. His mom takes him to Sunshine School where he meets friends his own age with whom he can have fun.

Ages 6-8

My Teacher Sleeps in School, by Leatie Weiss. Mrs. Marsh's class thinks she lives in her classroom. After they try to make her life easier, she surprises them by taking the class to see where she really lives.

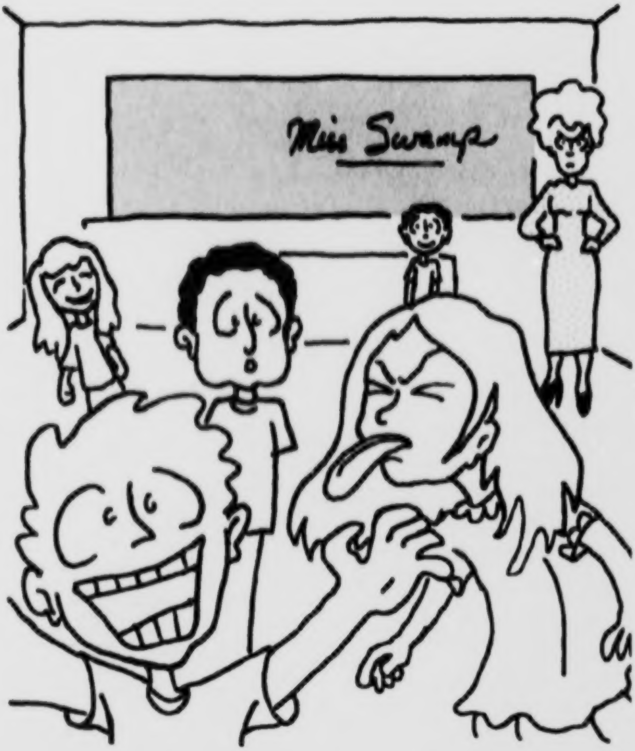
My First Day at School, by Ronnie Sellers. Ben discovers school is an exciting place to have fun and to learn. He is a little afraid, but at the end of the day feels proud because he made it through the day on his own.

My Day at School! by Felicia Law. Explains through text and pictures the various events and activities that take place in school. At the end of the book are suggestions for parents concerning things to talk about, things to do, and a list of other books about going to school.

Ages 8-10

All Alone after School, by Muriel Stanek. A young boy must stay at home by himself after school. He learns what to do and what not to do, and eventually develops confidence in himself.

SCRUBBA-SCRUB!



Miss Nelson Is Back, by Harry Allard and James Marshall. When Miss Nelson leaves to go to the hospital, her students go wild. They are having a great time until Miss Swamp arrives. "The Swamp" gets things under control and back in order just in time.

Ramona Quimby, Age 8, by Beverly Cleary. Ramona is going to a new school, and she has to adjust to her mom working and her dad going to art school. Ramona is brave and manages to succeed.

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Books for Your Children to Read by Themselves

Ages 4-6

First Day of School, by Helen Oxenbury. A little girl does not want to go to her first day of nursery school. She makes friends with Nora, and enjoys her day after all.

Teach Me about School, by Joy Berry (Childrens Press). A young boy takes the reader on a tour of his school. Describes the people, activities, areas, and objects found in school.

My First Day of School, by P. K. Hallinan (Childrens Press). Patrick shares his first day of school by telling about the people he meets, games he plays, and things he learns.

Ages 6-8

Starting School, by Janet and Allan Ahlberg. Eight friends begin school together. Shows some of what they do and learn the first day, the first week, and up until the winter holiday.

First Grade Jitters, by Robert Quackenbush. A little rabbit is nervous and anxious about the first grade. He gets together to play with his friends and talks about school and their teacher. They help him to relax, and his worries soon fade.

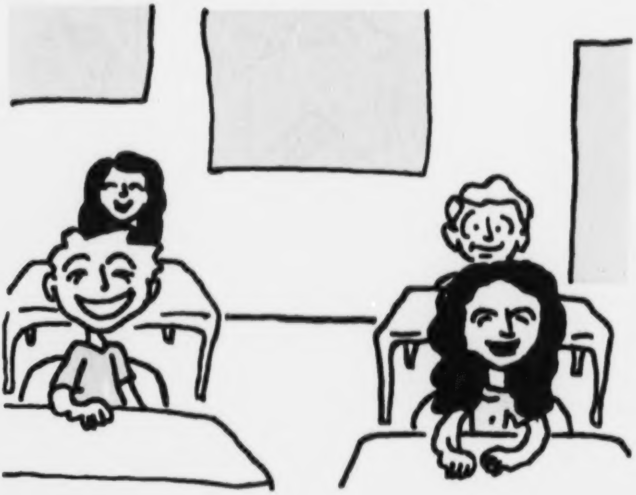
Morris Goes to School, by B. Wiseman. Morris is a moose who is having trouble because he cannot count or read. He goes to school and learns how to count and read, and makes lots of new friends, too!

Ages 8-10

That Dreadful Day, by James Stevenson. Mary Ann and Louie tell their Grandpa about their terrible first day of school. He shares a humorous story about one of his first days, and it helps them look forward to their second day.

The Substitute, by Ann Lawler. Mrs. O'Mallyho is not a typical substitute teacher. She surprises Miss Niles' class by sharing her magical music with them.

Teach Us, Amelia Bedelia, by Peggy Parrish. Amelia Bedelia accidentally becomes a substitute teacher. She misunderstands most of her instructions, and the children have a hilariously fun day.



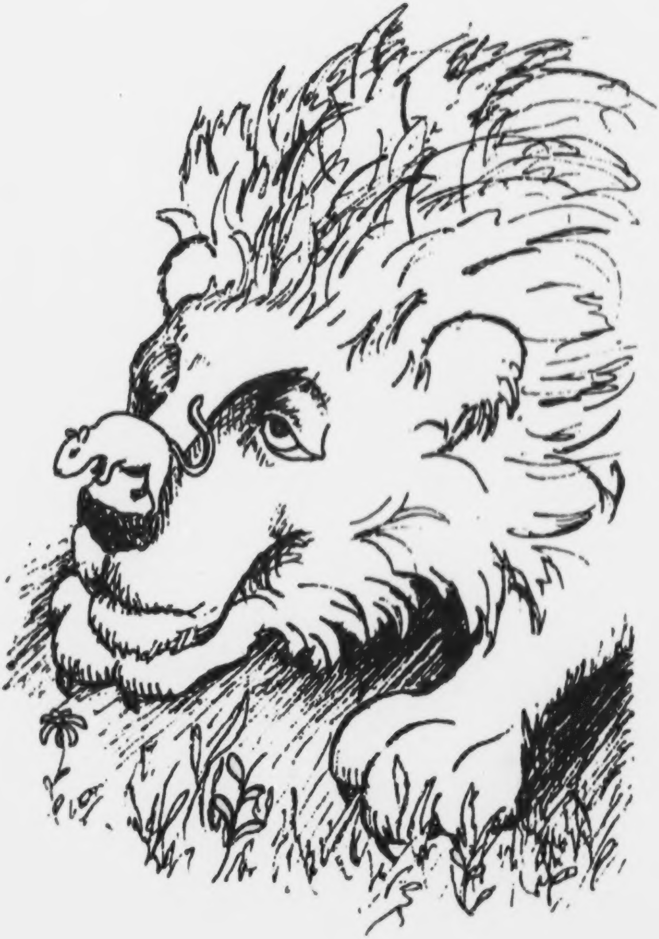
Magazines

Also ask the librarian for the following magazines for children:

Bear Essential News for Kids
Children's Playmate
Cricket
Highlights for Children
Koala Club News
Letterbug
Odyssey
Sesame Street Magazine

* * *

Read-along Stories



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The Lion and the Mouse

Retold by Ruth Fellingham

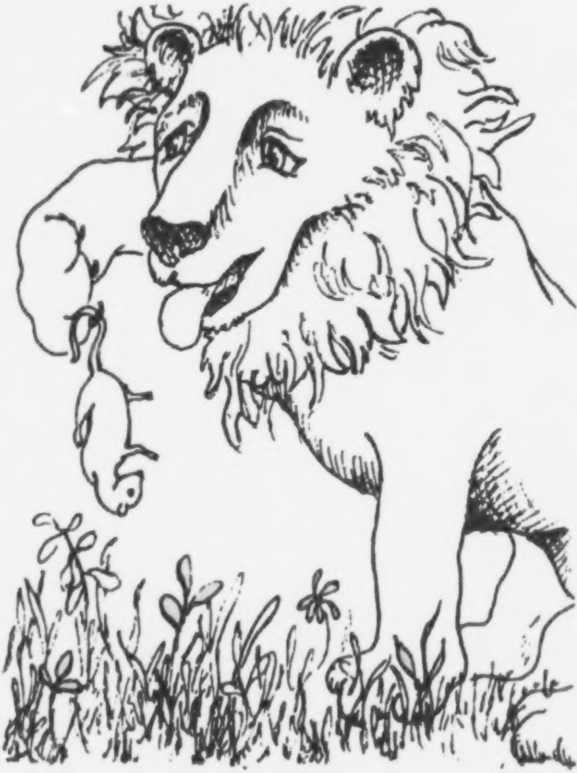
Things to do *before* reading the story

Talk about a situation when someone has not believed you would do something. When you did do it, were they surprised? What did they say?

A large and ferocious lion had just returned from a hard day at work when he decided to take a quick nap before eating dinner. As the lion was falling into a deep sleep on some soft grass, he began to dream that something was crawling over him. Suddenly the lion woke up from his peaceful sleep to find a small gray mouse on top of his nose. The little mouse was breathing hard and obviously did not realize that she was on the huge beast. The lion opened one eye and peeked to make sure the mouse was not looking. The lion then quickly grabbed for the mouse and held her tightly in his paw. "What do you think you are doing, little mouse?" asked the lion.

The terribly frightened mouse answered, "I am on my way back home to eat dinner with my family. I usually do not travel this way, but I needed to find a short cut for I am late."

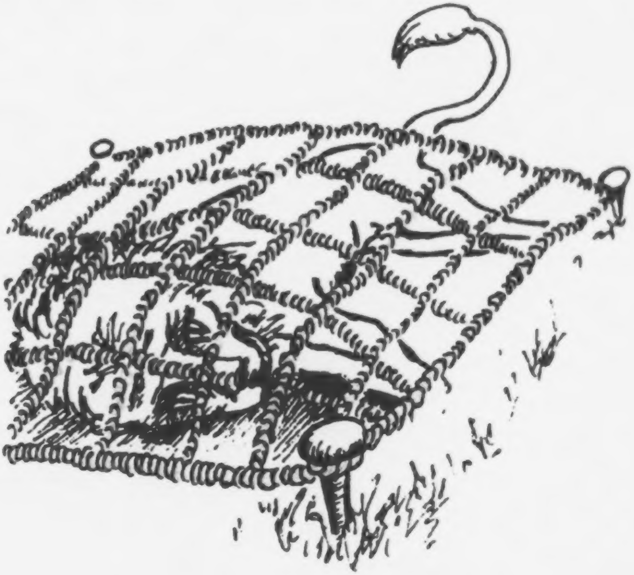
The lion smiled because he knew the mouse was afraid of him and said, "I am happy to invite you to a little dinner party of my own!"



Just as the lion was about to drop the mouse into his mouth, the little mouse spoke. She said, "Oh great beast of the jungle, please allow me to live and I will surely repay you soon."

The lion laughed heartily and said, "Okay little mouse, I don't really think you can help me, and besides you won't satisfy my hunger anyway. So you may go."

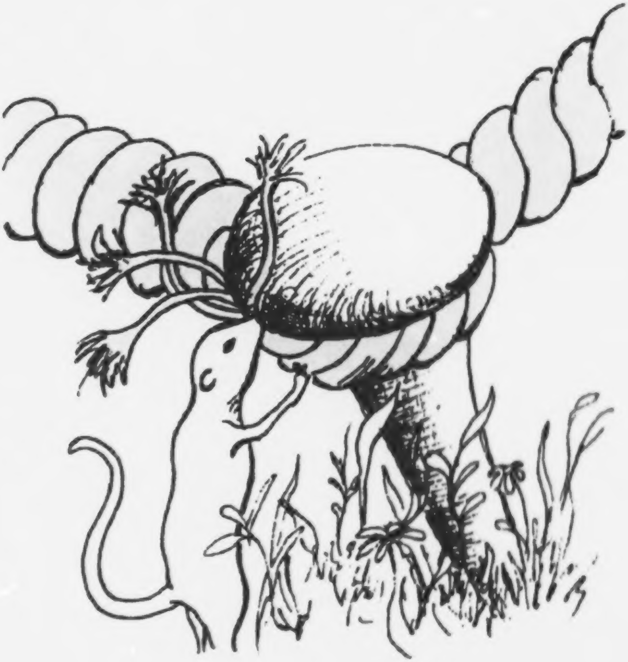
As soon as the lion fell asleep, four big hunters circled the lion and quickly tied him up. Before the poor lion knew what was happening to him, he was tied tightly to the ground. The lion burst out with a loud roar as the hunters were deciding what to do with him.

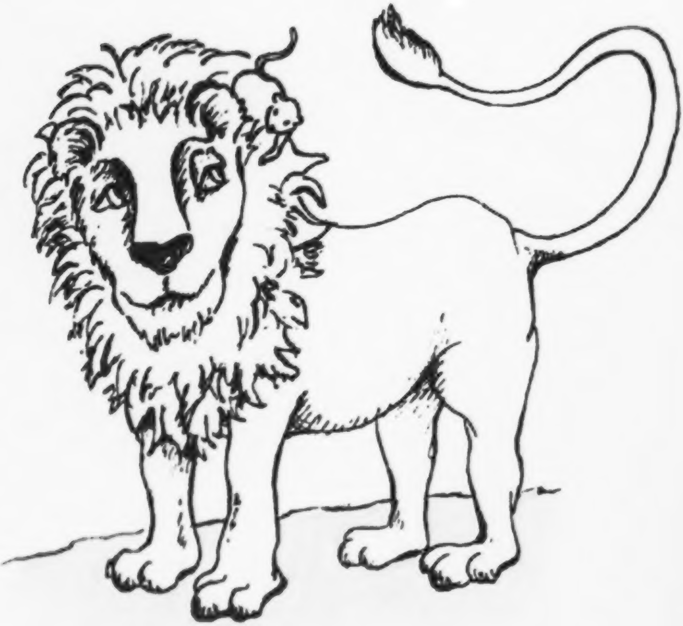


Meanwhile, the mouse listened closely to the roar and scampered through the jungle to find the lion. The little mouse was excited to be given the chance to live up to her promise. "Oh lion," said the mouse, "now I will be able to help you."

"But how?" asked the lion.

"Watch," said the mouse as she quickly began to chew through the ropes. Soon, the lion was set free and the mouse jumped on the lion's mane and the two ran until the hunters were far behind.

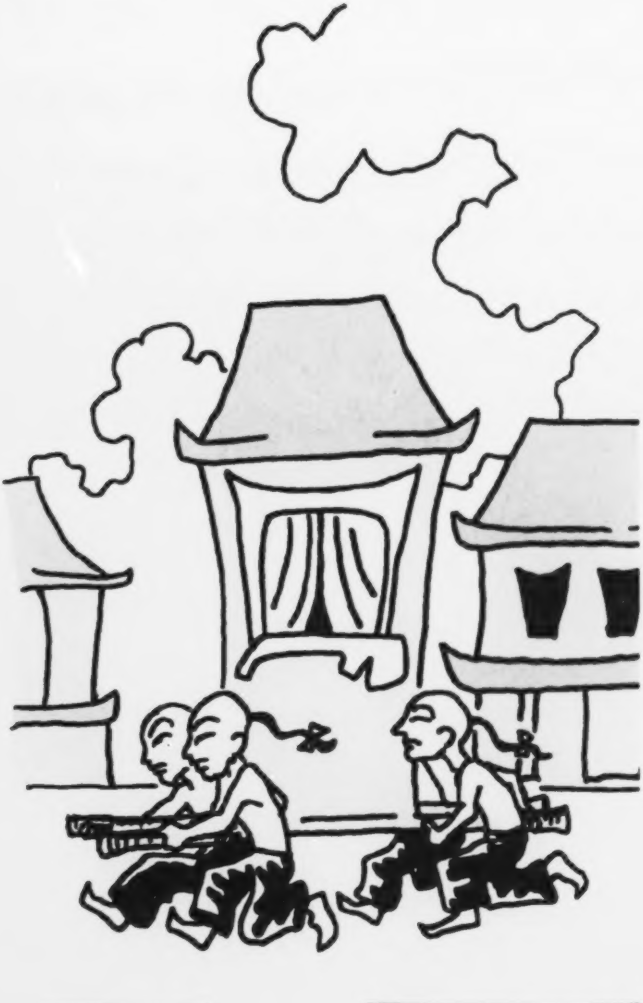




When they found a cleared spot in the jungle, they stopped. Then the mouse remarked, "Although one may be small, you should never doubt her ability to help a friend in need."

Things to do *after* reading the story

Do you have a special relationship with a friend similar to that of the lion and the mouse? Talk about how the two of you met. What makes your relationship special?



The Butterfly Lovers

Retold by Dora Chen

Things to do *before* reading the story

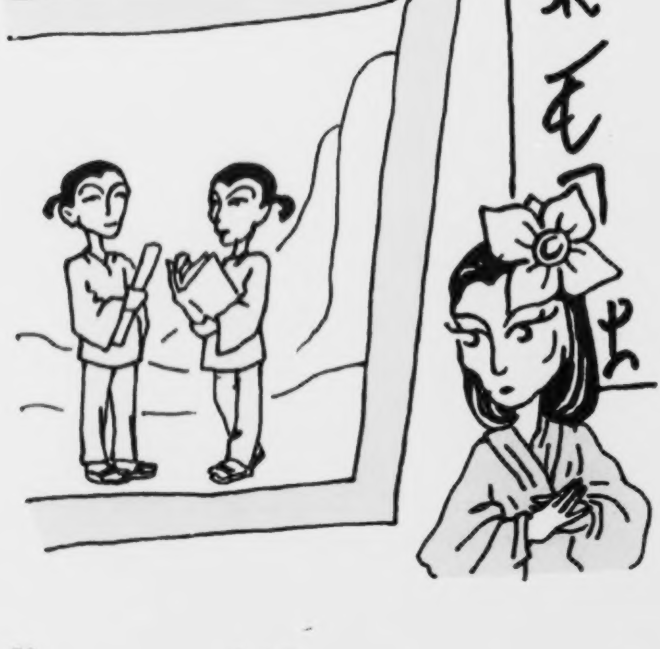
Life in ancient China was quite different than life today. Perhaps you have a book on China that can help you understand its traditional culture. Talk about what you know of ancient China and try to picture what it was like in those days to be a young Chinese girl or boy. As you read, see if any of your ideas fit with what happens in this story.

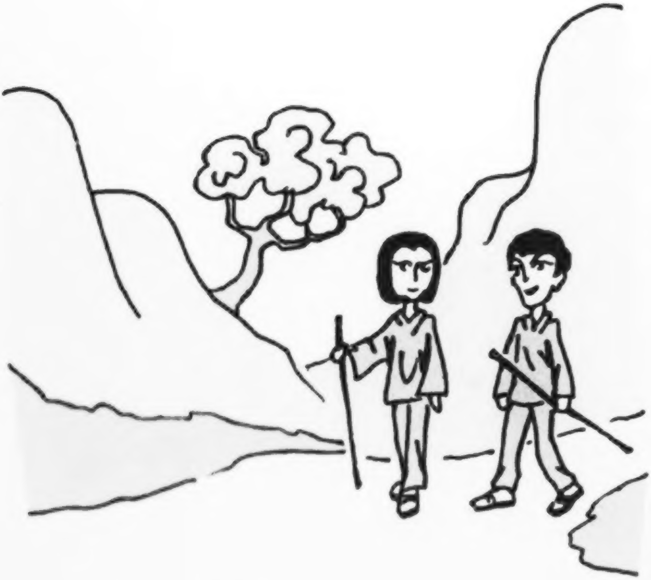
In ancient times, young girls in China stayed home with their mothers and learned sewing, cooking, and housekeeping. They were not allowed to go to school or to leave their homes unless they rode in a sedan.

Sedans were used in ancient China to carry people from place to place. They were like little houses with only one seat inside. Two long poles were attached to the sides, and four men carried them, two in front and two in back.

In those days, a Chinese girl could not let any man see her face before she got married. So to find a husband, a girl would use a matchmaker, usually a woman. Matchmakers arranged marriages, and after two people were matched, the matchmaker would act as "master of ceremonies" at their wedding.

A beautiful girl named Chu-Yin-Tai lived in China during those times. Chu-Yin-Tai loved to read. She longed to study at school like the young men in her village. One day she said to herself, "I am going to make myself up to look like a man, and go to a school far from my home."

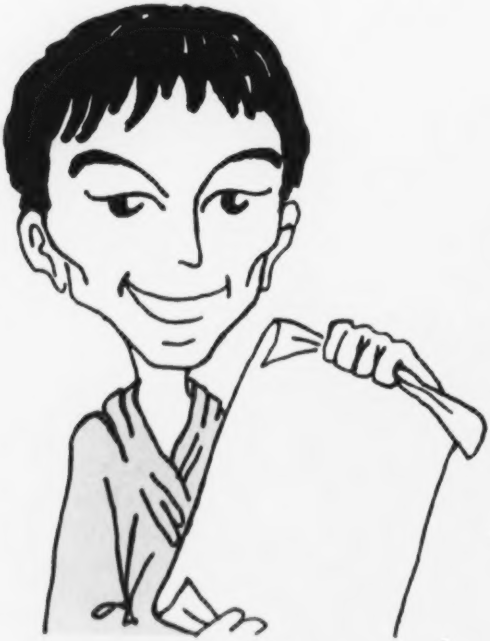




After Chu-Yin-Tai had completed her disguise, she set out on her journey. Along the way, she met a handsome young man, Liang-Shan-Po, who was on his way to the same school. Chu-Yin-Tai and Liang-Shan-Po soon became good friends, because they had many things in common. They often studied and played together.

One day, Chu-Yin-Tai's parents sent an urgent letter to her school. "Return home immediately!" the letter said. Chu-Yin-Tai still had great respect for her parents. So she decided to obey them and go back home.

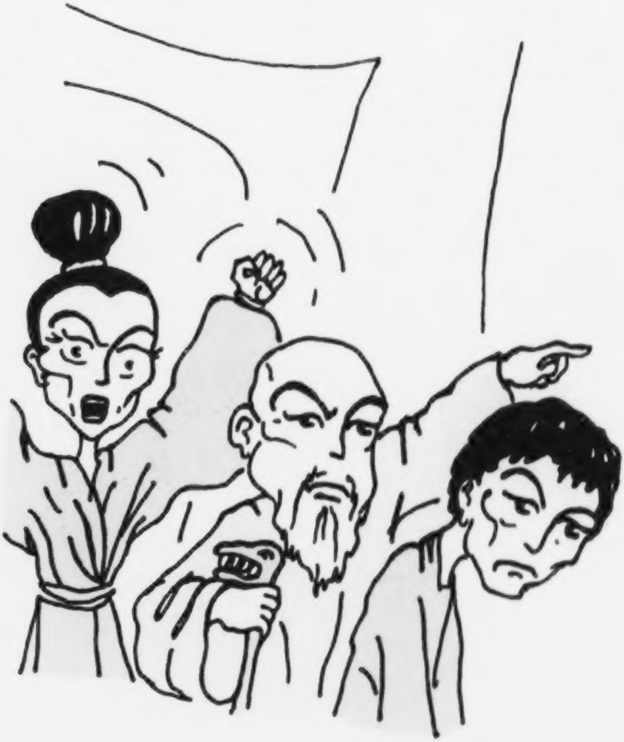
Before she went home, Chu-Yin-Tai left a present and a letter for Liang-Shan-Po. In the letter, she said, "I am really a girl. I have grown to love you very much, and I want to marry you some day. I shall wait at my parents' home until you send a matchmaker who can arrange our marriage."



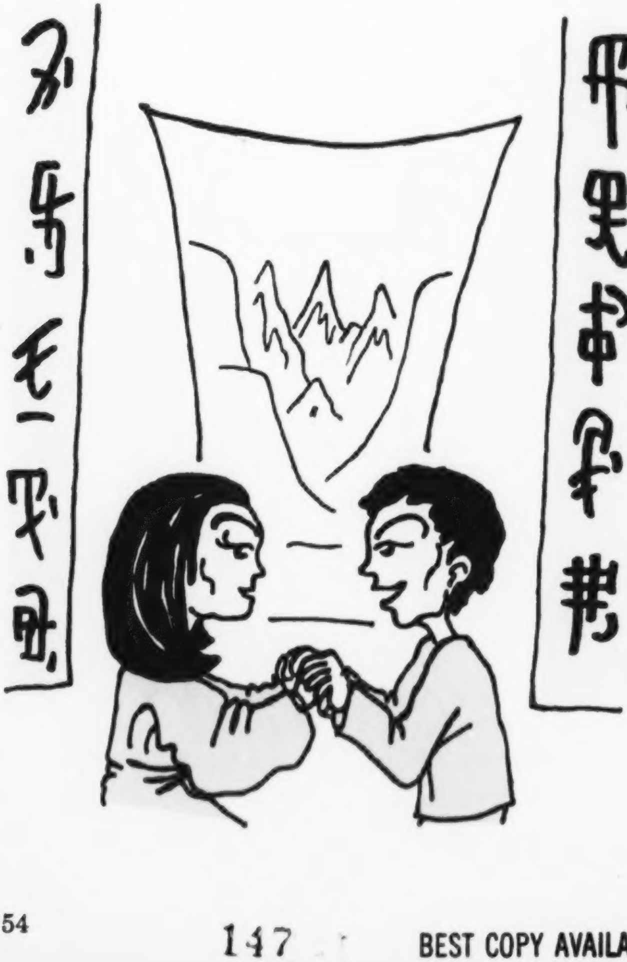
After Liang-Shan-Po read the letter, he realized that his friendship with Chu-Yin-Tai had blossomed into love! With great joy, he went quickly to Chu-Yin-Tai's house.

When he arrived, Chu-Yin-Tai's parents told him, "We have already promised our daughter to another young man."

The young man whom the parents preferred came from a rich and famous family. Chu-Yin-Tai's parents were poor. They wanted her to marry into this family so they could benefit from being related to wealthy people. Because Liang-Shan-Po was not from such a family, they rejected his pleas to marry their daughter. In a rage, the parents drove poor Liang-Shan-Po from their home!



Liang-Shan-Po tried to get in to see Chu-Yin-Tai because he wanted to find out how she felt about him. Liang-Shan-Po was not allowed into the home of Chu-Yin-Tai's parents, but with the help of Chu-Yin-Tai's maid, he finally snuck into the house and met his beloved in her room. How happy they were to see each other again! They talked about the good old days at school.



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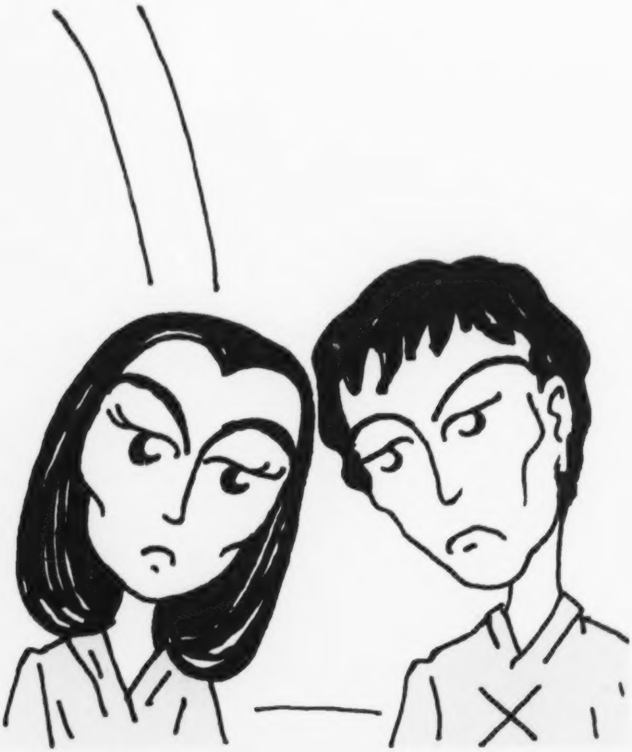
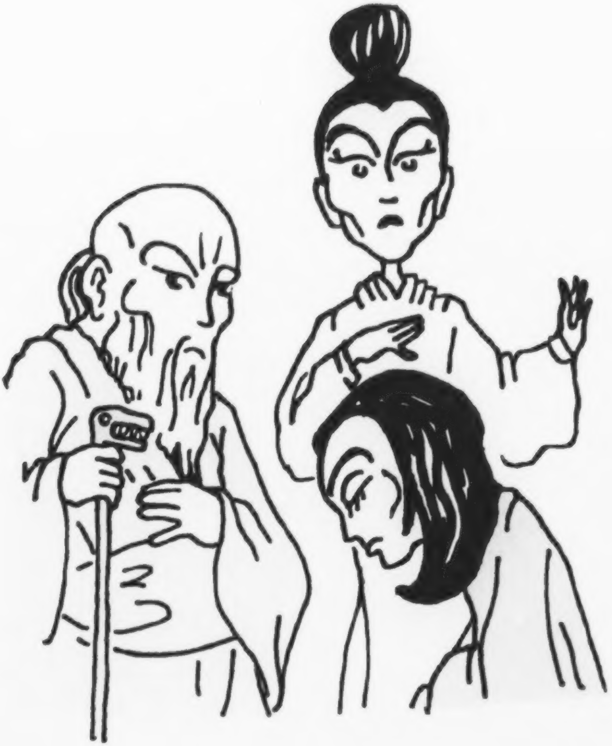
"What fun we had then! If only we could live that way again, and be together forever as husband and wife," Chu-Yin-Tai said. "I love you very much, Liang-Shan-Po, but I fear that we shall never marry."

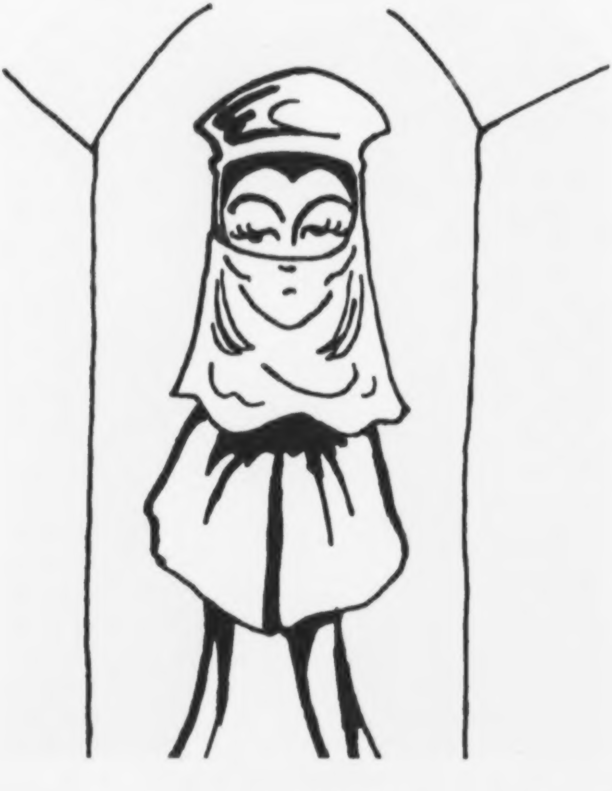


Both Chu-Yin-Tai and Liang-Shan-Po felt sad about their fate. Seeing no hope for the future, Liang-Shan-Po left his beloved with a broken heart and feelings of deep regret. From that day on, Liang-Shan-Po fell ill and finally died.

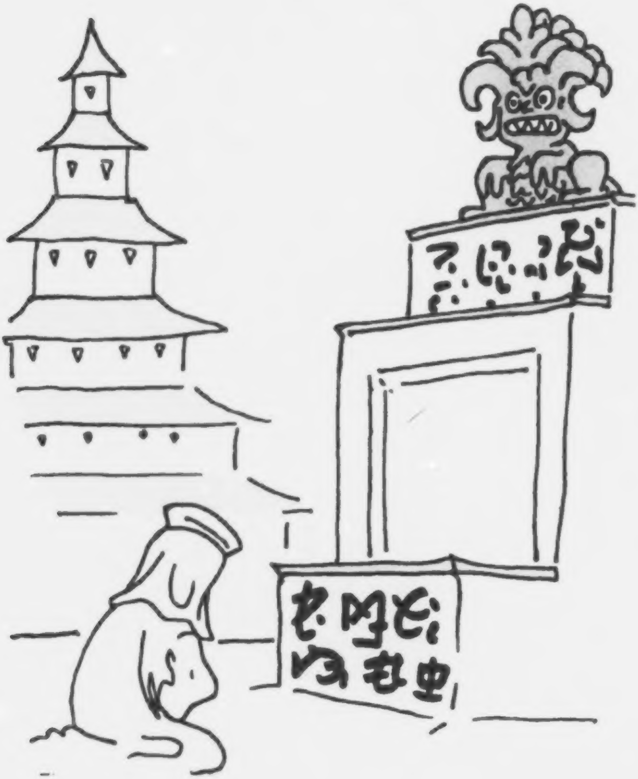


Meanwhile, Chu-Yin-Tai's parents remained firm in their belief that she should marry the rich young man instead of Liang-Shan-Po. They warned her, "Unless you marry the wealthy young man we have chosen for you, we will surely die." Because she loved her parents, Chu-Yin-Tai finally nodded her head and agreed to the arranged marriage.

On the day of her wedding, Chu-Yin-Tai was told of Liang-Shan-Po's death. In great grief, she said, "I will wear white for my wedding instead of red." This meant that she was grieving for Liang-Shan-Po, because in China, even today, white is worn when someone dies, and red is a joyful color that people wear for good luck at weddings. So, by changing from red clothes to white ones, Chu-Yin-Tai was showing respect for her departed loved one.



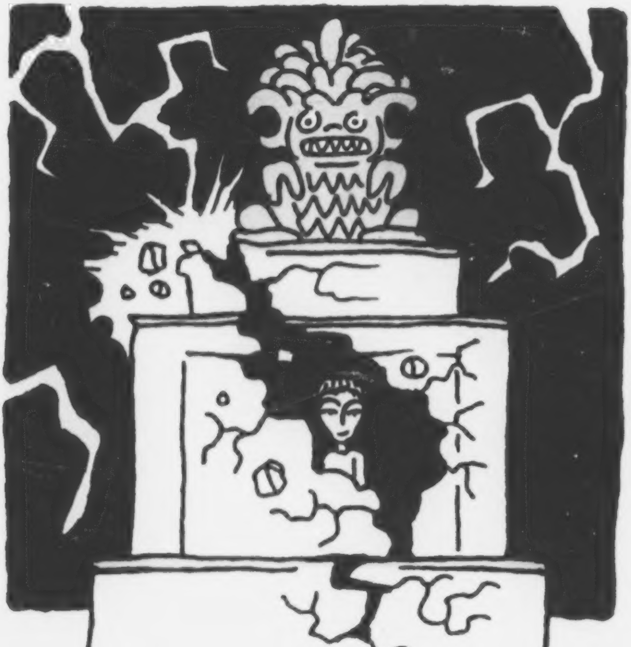
Chu-Yin-Tai also asked her sedan carriers, "Please pass by Liang-Shan-Po's tomb during my wedding procession, so that I can pay my last respects to him."



In front of the tomb, Chu-Yin-Tai knelt down and cried out with all her heart, "I miss you so, my beloved Liang-Shan-Po!" Her tearful cries were so heartfelt, they even saddened the heavens.

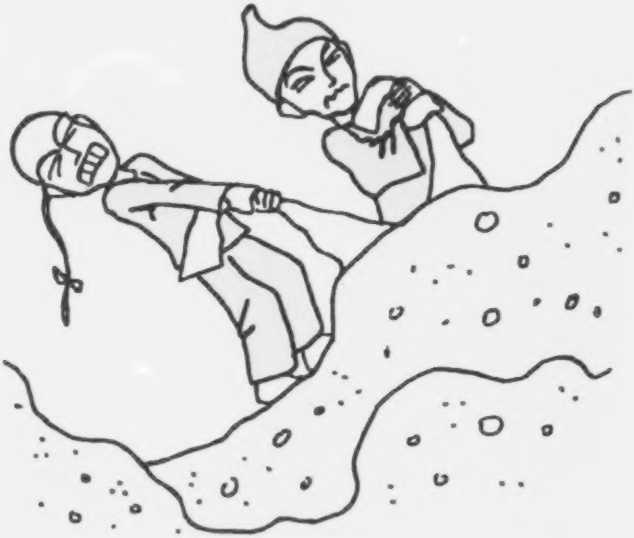
All of a sudden, the skies changed from clear blue and white to grey and black. Dark clouds gathered. A roaring wind came up, and heavy rain began to fall. The rain fell so hard, the people at the wedding could hardly open their eyes!

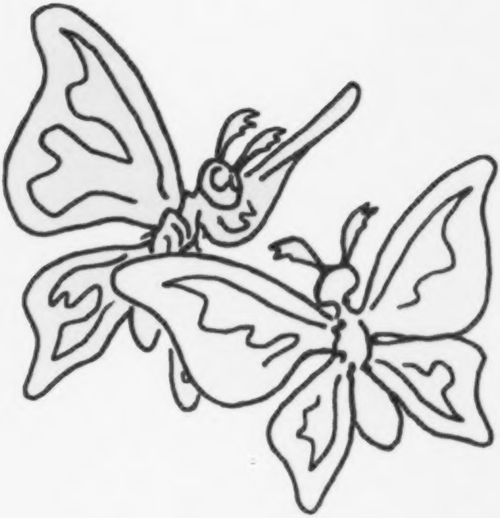
Meanwhile, thunder began to rumble, and a great bolt of lightening struck the tomb of Liang-Shan-Po. With a loud noise, the tomb cracked and split! Suddenly, Liang-Shan-Po appeared in the opened tomb! He waved and smiled at Chu-Yin-Tai.



Chu-Yin-Tai was so happy to see her beloved again that she cried out with joy, "We are together again, my darling Liang-Shan-Po!" Chu-Yin-Tai then jumped into the tomb without a second thought.

As soon as the lovers embraced, gusts of wind blew heaps of dirt that covered the tomb. The ends of Chu-Yin-Tai's sleeves stuck out from the tomb. The people serving at Chu-Yin-Tai's wedding tried to drag her back to the surface. They tugged with all their might at the sleeves of Chu-Yin-Tai's dress.

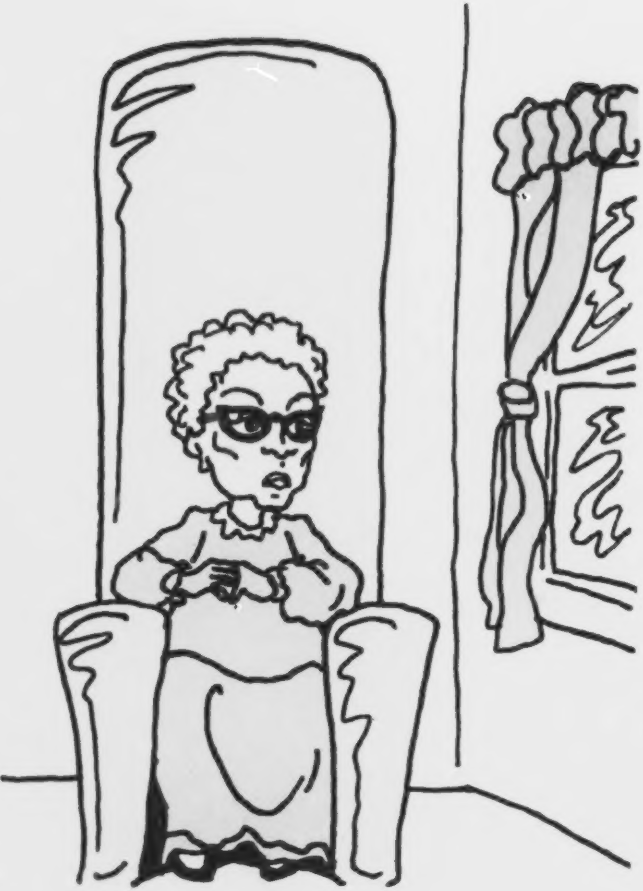




Suddenly, the sleeves broke loose from the tomb and turned into two beautiful butterflies! The two flew happily away. At that same moment, the skies cleared up and the land and people grew still and calm. The butterfly lovers were together at last!

Things to do *after* reading the story

Chu-Yin-Tai and Liang-Shan-Po loved each other very much. Think of some people you love and of how you could do something special for them. Perhaps you could draw them pictures or write notes telling how much you care for them.



Grandma's Great Escape

by Judith Logan Lehne

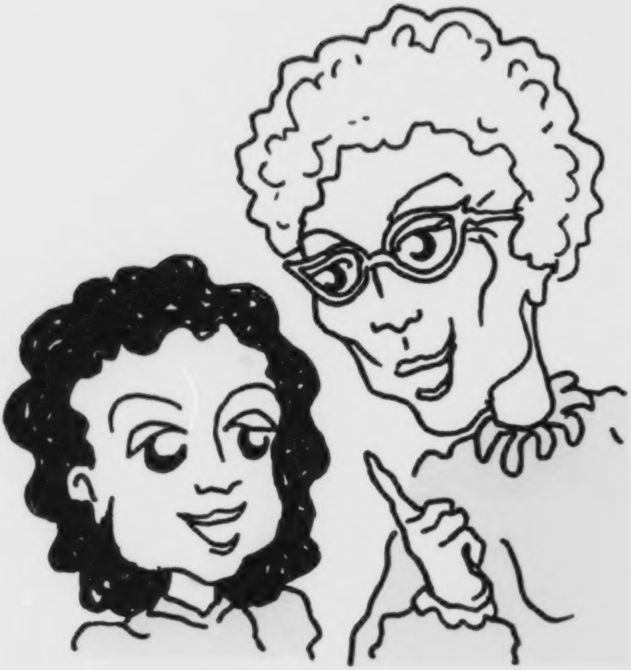
Things to do *before* reading the story

Talk about an enjoyable time you've had with a grandparent or some other older person. See if your experience is like the story told in "Grandma's Great Escape."

Who'd have thought my sweet grandma would run away from the nursing home?

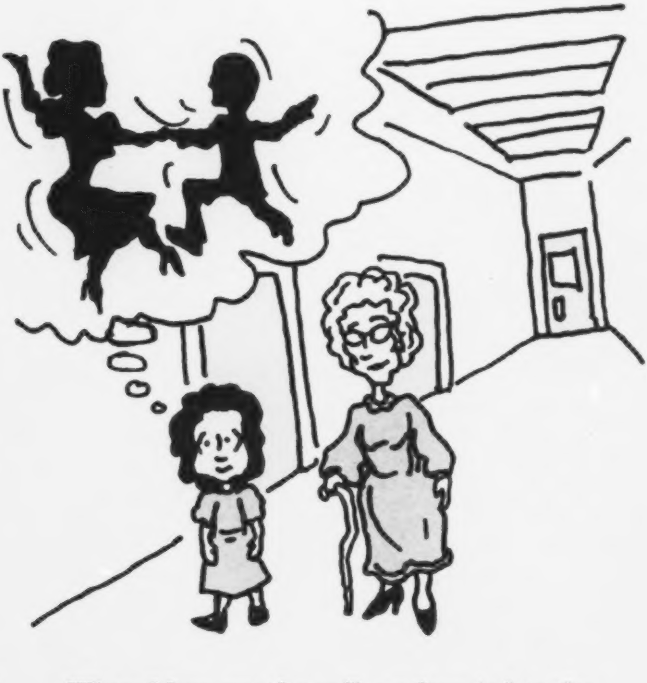
My grandma is old. Mom says she's eighty-one, but Grandma tells me, "No way, Tina!" She says she doesn't feel that old and that she stopped counting a long time ago.

She can't read my schoolwork anymore. She says her eyes turn my fancy words into blue-ink seas on the page. "My eyes got all used up doing needlework and checking under children's beds," she says.



Grandma forgets things, too. Sometimes she calls me Emma. That's Mom's name. I don't tell Grandma when she gets mixed up. I just smile and let her call me by whatever name she wants. Once Grandma told me that our brains are like tape recorders and that everything we do is stored so that we can "rewind" the memories another day. Grandma doesn't always remember today, but her rewind-memories are terrific.

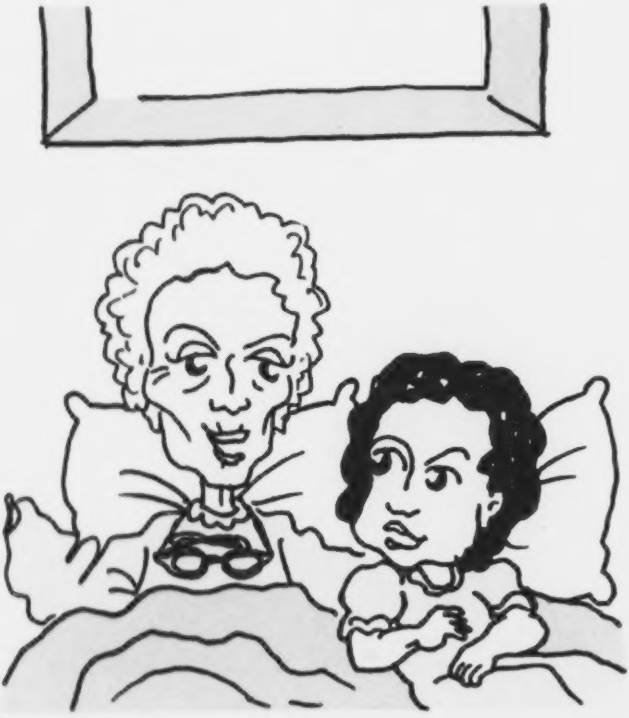
Walking is hard on Grandma. She tells me how she used to dance around the kitchen with her "wee ones." I can't imagine Grandma dipping and twirling on light tiptoes. She has to hold a cane now, and her feet shuffle-swish when I walk the halls of the nursing home with her. Which is why it was pretty amazing the day she made her great escape.

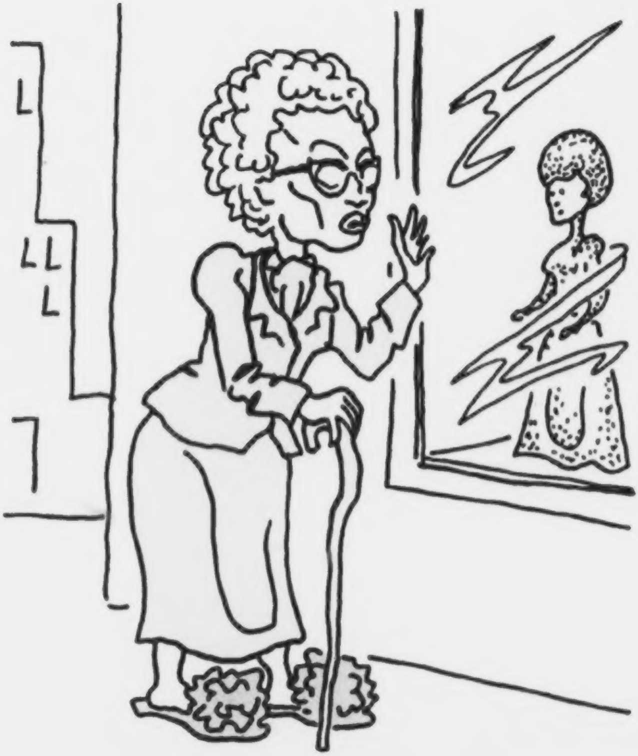


When Mom got the call, we hurried to the nursing home. Mom's face was tight, and her fingers were squeezed white around the steering wheel as she drove.

When we arrived, we found that Grandma had already returned. There was a lot of whispered fussing around her. Grandma's favorite nurse sat next to her, holding her hand. Grandma sat still on the bed and stared out the window. Her face looked calm, but her eyes had a secret twinkle. I waited patiently beside the dresser, trying to be invisible, until we were alone in the room. Then I snuggled next to her.

"Ah, Tina-tiny," she said, using my baby nickname. "I had a fine adventure today!"

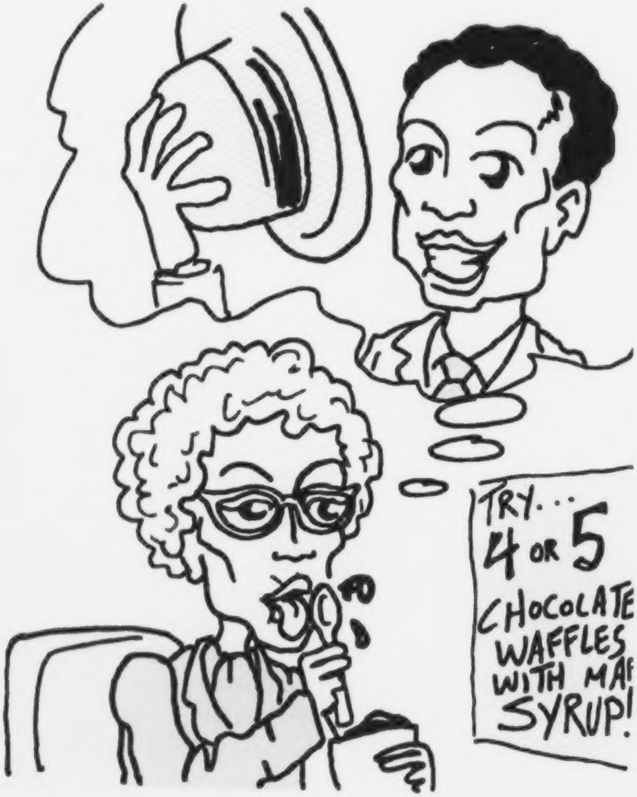




I sat pretzel-legged on the bed and listened. She said she'd put on her best dress and strolled out the door. Carefully scuffing one pink slipper in front of the other, she'd followed the sidewalk into town, peering into store windows and nodding to people. The toys in the window of Alex's Antiques drew her inside, where she spied a glass doll like one she'd had when she was my age. Outside, the sun was shining in the polished window. "Just like the day I first met Grandpa," she said.

I leaned closer to Grandma, watching her happy eyes.

"When I entered the ice-cream parlor, Tina, the scent of chocolate fudge filled me with sweet memories." Grandma's voice got deep," 'Allow me to treat a pretty miss to a sundae,' your grandpa said, standing so tall behind O'Grady's counter nearly sixty years ago." As she talked, her wrinkles seemed to disappear, like magic.


TRY...
4 OR 5
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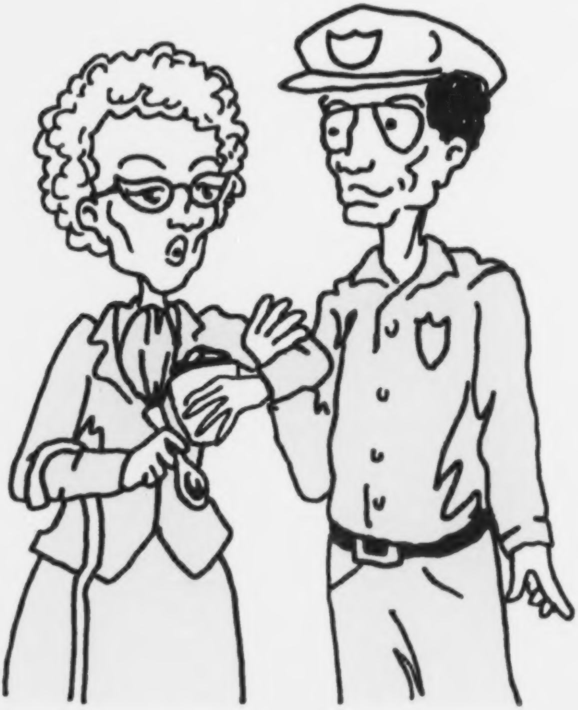
SYRUP!

Grandma said she licked the hot fudge clinging to the spoon, and in her mind she saw pictures of Grandpa's warm brown eyes.



"It was as if he were sitting right beside me," she said, blushing. "My eyes got misty, and when I wiped them, a young policeman was there. He held out a strong hand. 'We'll go back now,' he said. For a moment I thought he meant back to O'Grady's, but he brought me back here instead." She sighed and shrugged her shoulders.

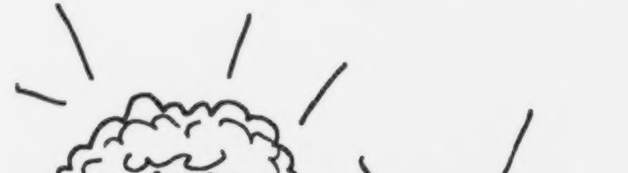
"The sundae was wonderful," she whispered, her eyes twinkling once again. "Perhaps if I hadn't forgotten to pay, I'd have had time for another."

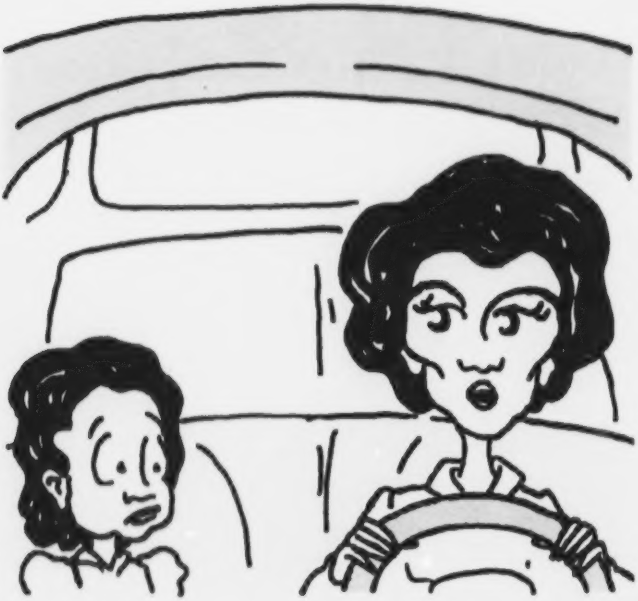
"I think the pink slippers were the problem, Grandma," I said.

"Yes, that, too. Pink was the wrong color for a red dress!"

We both giggled until we got the hiccups.

Mom and the nurses didn't think Grandma's escape was funny at all.





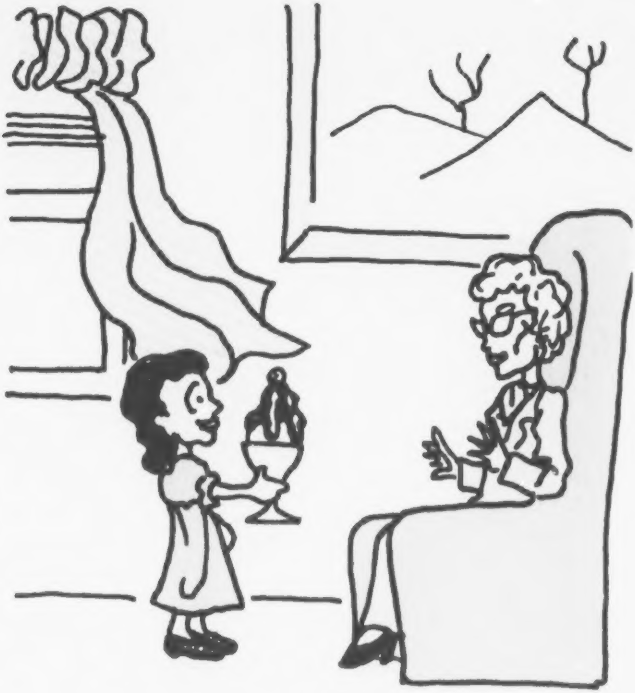
"Gee, Mom," I said on the way home. "Can't Grandma have any fun? She just wanted some fresh air and ice cream."

"We were worried, Tina," Mom told me. "Grandma could fall, or she could forget about crosswalks and traffic." Mom took a deep breath and reached across the seat for my hand. "Grandma has Alzheimer's disease, Tina. It's a sickness that makes her forget things—important things—sometimes. We have to keep Grandma safe, and that's not always easy to do."

Now I was getting worried, too. "Do you mean that Grandma won't ever be able to leave the nursing home?"

"No, dear," Mom said. "She'll still come with us for Sunday dinner and holidays and special trips. But it's too dangerous for Grandma to go out alone anymore."

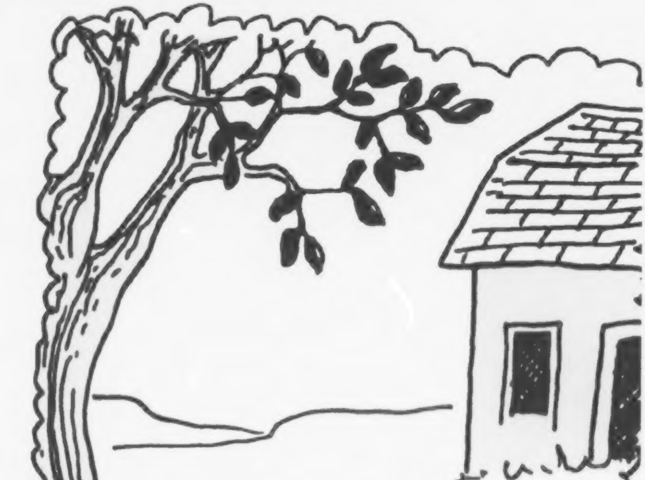
I knew Mom was right, but Grandma had been so happy with her special adventure. There just had to be a way to keep Grandma safe and let her have some fun, too. I thought and thought and thought some more. Finally, I had a plan.

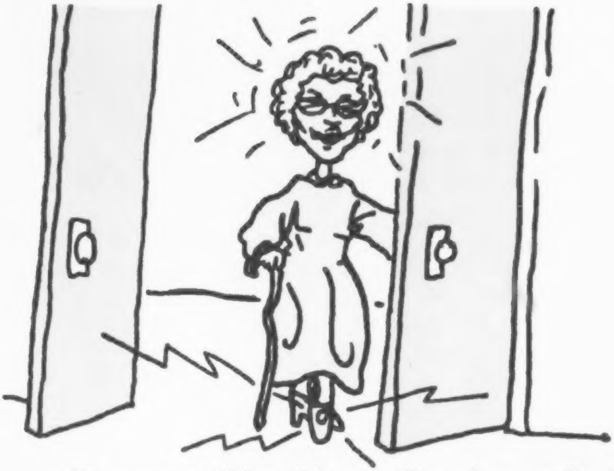


Now, every Tuesday when I visit Grandma, the nurses help her into her red dress. Her window is open, blowing sweet air and sunshine around the room. I bring her a hot-fudge sundae, and we laugh about her great escape.

"You know, Tina," she told me. "They put silly buttons on my shoes that will beep if I go adventuring again. They think I don't know, but..." She winked at me. "They needn't worry," she said. "You bring me all the hot fudge and fun I'll ever need."

Last week Grandma called me Emma again. She took me on a memory-trip to a farm in Virginia where Mom chased a black "kitty" with white stripes. Grandma caught Mom just in time, and the skunk waddled away.





We were still laughing as Grandma walked me to the door and hugged me good-bye. But before I left, she stuck her button-shoe over the doorstep. I heard a beep echo in the hall. Grandma's shoulders bumped up and down as she shuffled back toward her room laughing. The nurses smiled.

Things to do *after* reading the story

Have you ever been on a "memory trip" like the ones Tina goes on with her grandma in the story? Together write down your memories and share them with other people through a story like "Grandma's Great Escape."

Books of Special Interest to Parents

How Can I Prepare My Young Child for Reading? by Paula C. Grinnell. Presents ideas to assist parents in preparing their children for reading. Focuses on children from birth through kindergarten. ($1.75)

You Can Help Your Young Child with Writing, by Marcia Baghban. Suggests methods parents can use to help develop their children's writing at home. Offers writing and reading activities. ($1.75)

Beginning Literacy and Your Child, by Steven B. Silvern and Linda R. Silvern. Recommends ways parents can participate in the development of their children's literacy. Provides activities for talking, reading, writing, and listening. ($1.75)

Helping Your Child Become a Reader, by Nancy L. Roser. Provides suggestions for parents to help them encourage their children to read. Offers several practical activities for parents. ($1.75)

Creating Readers and Writers, by Susan Mandel Glazer. Suggests that parents: (1) encourage the use of language; (2) build positive attitudes toward reading, writing, and speaking; and (3) demonstrate the purposes of literacy. Includes book suggestions classified by age groups. ($1.75)

You Can Encourage Your High School Student to Read, by Jamie Myers. Offers practical ideas parents can use to encourage their teenagers to read more. Shows how reading can serve adolescents' needs, and presents future needs that reading can fulfill. ($1.75)

Your Child's Vision Is Important by Caroline Beverstock. Discusses how vision affects school work, how different eye problems affect vision, and how to spot vision problems. Includes suggestions for dealing with vision difficulties. ($1.75)

101 Ideas to Help Your Child Learn to Read and Write, by Mary and Richard Behm. Ideas are presented to help parents use resources from around the home to promote literacy. The activities are educationally sound and fun for the parent and child to do together. ($6.50)

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Stories for Children and Parents:

1. *Make the story fun for children—your primary audience. The adult reading along will enjoy the story if the child does.*
2. *Make sure that your story is acceptable to parents. We do not want parents to reject the story because it is inappropriate for their children. Writing a story of interest to children and at the same time pleasing to parents is a big challenge.*
3. *Your story should be no longer than eight double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.*
4. *Correct grammar and syntax are important. For the most part, we choose to model correct standard English.*
5. *Be careful about the vocabulary you use in your story. Rule out really long and difficult-to-pronounce words. Use "plain" English, when you can—words that have English roots rather than French or Latin ones.*
6. *Make your stories gender inclusive. Do not use sexist terminology or ideas. Our stories must be interesting to both boys and girls.*
7. *You may illustrate your own story, but they must be line drawings in pen and ink only. The drawings must be able to be scanned, so they must not contain too much detail.*

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September 1991

Parents and Children Together

Encouraging Good Homework Habits

Read-along Stories:

Boy with a Shovel
Rebel Cows: A Victim's Story
The Innkeeper's Boy

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This booklet has a companion audio tape on "Encouraging Good Homework Habits." Occasionally there are directions on the tape that do not appear in the booklet or headings in the booklet that aren't spoken on the tape.

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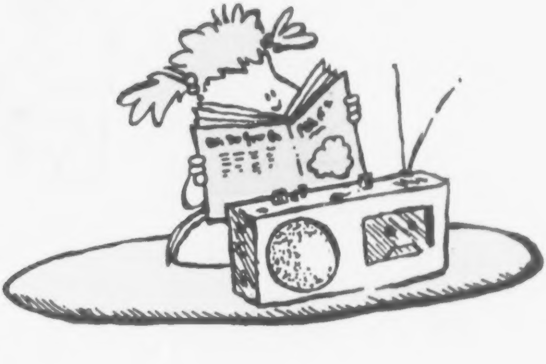
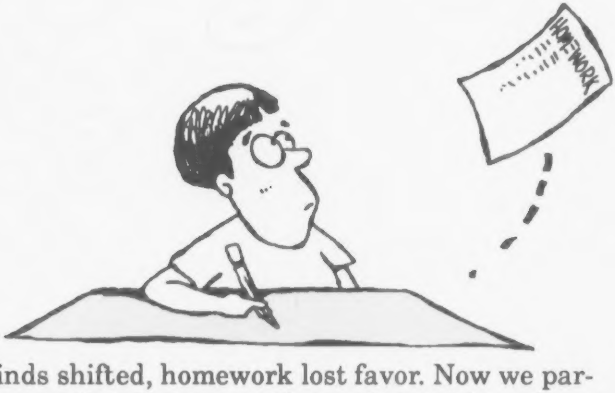
Getting Started

Welcome to this month's issue of *Parents and Children Together*. In this issue we look at how you can help your children with their homework. On side B of the tape (and in the second half of the booklet) we have three read-along stories. We encourage you to listen to these stories and to read them with your children, so that they can participate in the excitement of story reading. Of course, your child can also listen to the stories alone, if you wish.

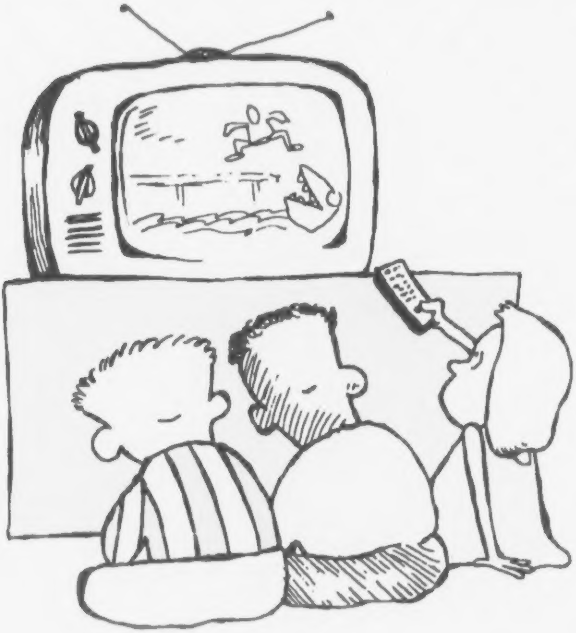


Homework is Home Learning

Homework is back in style. It used to be standard procedure for children to have daily homework assignments; then, as educational winds shifted, homework lost favor. Now we parents realize that we need practice and learning at home to develop abilities that enrich our children's lives. Some subjects, such as reading and math, require lots of extra practice, and the home is the best place for it.



So what does this mean for parents? Helping children to work on their own at home isn't easy. TV, games, and neighbors pull children in directions that look much more inviting than does studying at home. On their own, children do not usually see the long-term value of practicing math and communication skills. Why should they read history or try to figure out why electricity runs the motors in their homes? Nintendo games and hanging out around the TV set are much more fun. So parents have to help their children look into the future to see the value of homework and home learning.



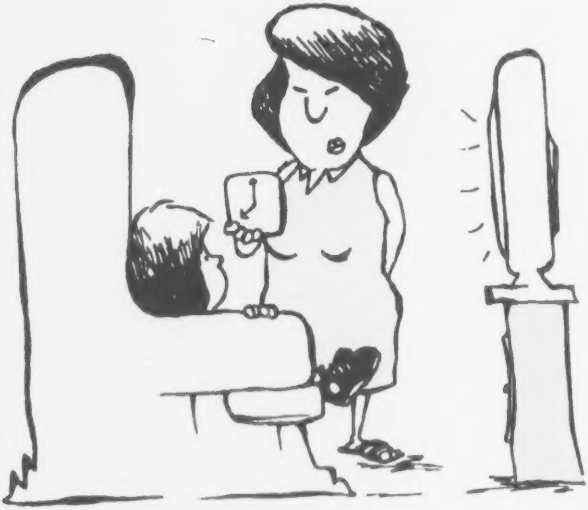
As is the case with so many attitudes, children take their first cues from their parents. If parents see homework as worthwhile, then it's likely their children will value it also. If parents see that home study and home practice lead to competent performance in reading or science, then children will take on that same vision. And if parents believe that their children must accept responsibility for their own success as learners, then children will gradually accept responsibility for their own progress.

Specific things that parents can do to help with home study include the following:

1) Listen, read, and talk with your children about school work. Just showing interest will improve their grades.

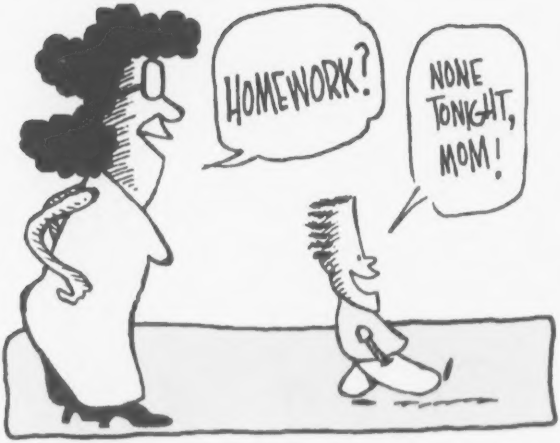
2) Provide structure to make home study easier to perform. For example, you can do the following:

Work with your children to set aside a specific time each day for homework.



Answer your children's questions and ask them about the material they are studying, but do not do their homework for them.

Encourage your children to bring home class notes so they become part of preparation for home learning.


HOMEWORK?
NONE TONIGHT, MOM!

Expect homework every night, even though your children may have an occasional free night. Reading an interesting book is a good substitute for assigned homework.

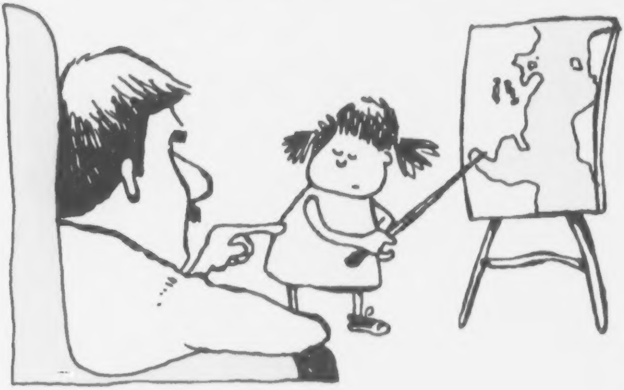
Encourage your children to write notes and ideas as a way of promoting critical thinking.

For more on notetaking, see our comments in the question-and-answer section of this issue.

3) Allow flexibility in time and place for home study, but encourage your child not to cancel it, or give it such a low priority that it becomes meaningless. If your child has an important game to play or some other school-related activity during normal study hours, allow her to shift homework times in order to participate in these other valuable activities. Homework can be done before or after the activity—preferably before.

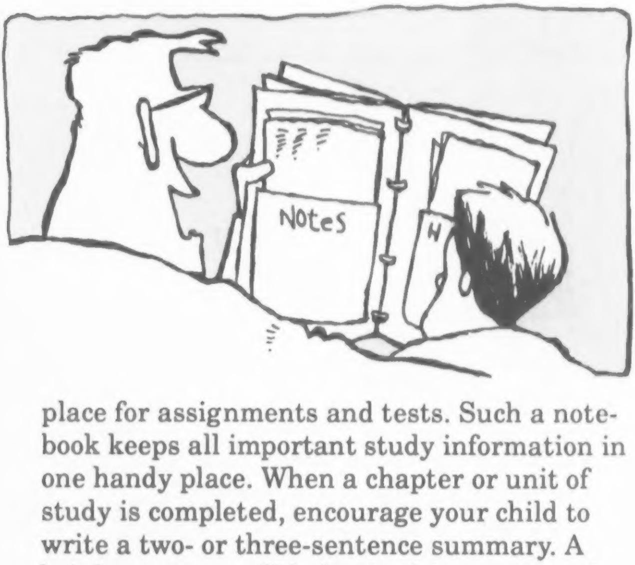
4) When your child completes his homework, ask him to talk about what he has done or what he has learned. A brief overview helps you keep abreast of the things your child learns in school and alerts you to problems he may be having. If you ask for this information each evening at a specified time, it is easier for you to keep track of your child, and it also puts a time cap on the homework period. Your child will probably appreciate that.

5) When your child is studying for a test, discourage "cramming" the night before the test. Ask your child to bring a textbook home at least every other night the week before the test. She can teach you what she has learned in school. Reverse roles—you be the learner. Your child will learn by teaching you. These discussions could be held at the dinner table. But remember, they should be pleasant discussions. They are ways for you to keep track of where your child is in a chapter or in a learning unit.



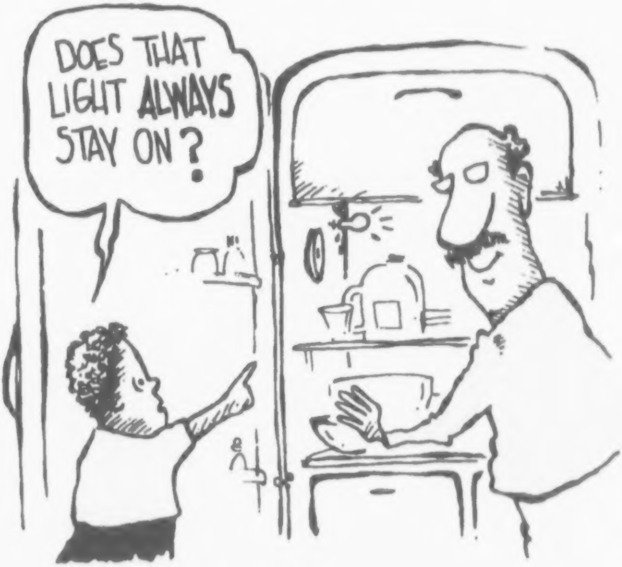
Perhaps you can use the questions at the end of the unit to direct these regular reviews. For example, your child might use them to quiz you, and then you could review the answers together. It is also helpful for your child to make up her own study questions about important ideas in a chapter. She could take them to the teacher. Who knows? The teacher might use these questions on a test.

6) Writing is an important way to learn. Help your child realize this by showing him how to organize a notebook with a place for personal notes, a place for teacher handouts, and a place for assignments and tests. Such a notebook keeps all important study information in one handy place. When a chapter or unit of study is completed, encourage your child to write a two- or three-sentence summary. A brief summary will help give him a sense of closure by including the topic and answers to what, how, and why. For example, a chapter on



the environment might be summarized with these two sentences: "The air we breathe will stay clean only if we all do our part. We need to use less gasoline and plant more trees in our cities to help nature recycle the air." As you can see, a summary acts only as a quick reminder of the chapter's content. The memory will then recall some of the important details.

If you remember to have homework become a regular part of your family's schedule and keep your discussions about homework as relaxed as possible, you can make major strides in using daily home learning in a beneficial way. You will soon see that by helping your child apply school learning to the world around her, you will make learning interesting and real. So do all you can to use maps in order to point out things and places mentioned on television. Also use the stove and refrigerator at home to demonstrate science principles. Finally, regularly use reference books as sources of information. Your attention to a few of these simple things will make homework the productive activity that it is meant to be.


DOES THAT LIGHT ALWAYS STAY ON?

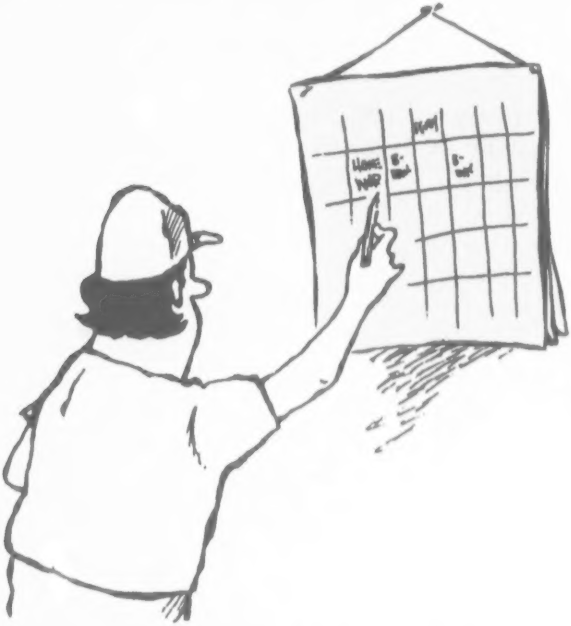
Questions about Homework and School

All parents have questions and need answers about their children. Here are some questions that other parents have asked concerning homework.

The older my son gets, the more disorganized he seems to be! How can I help him learn to organize his school work?

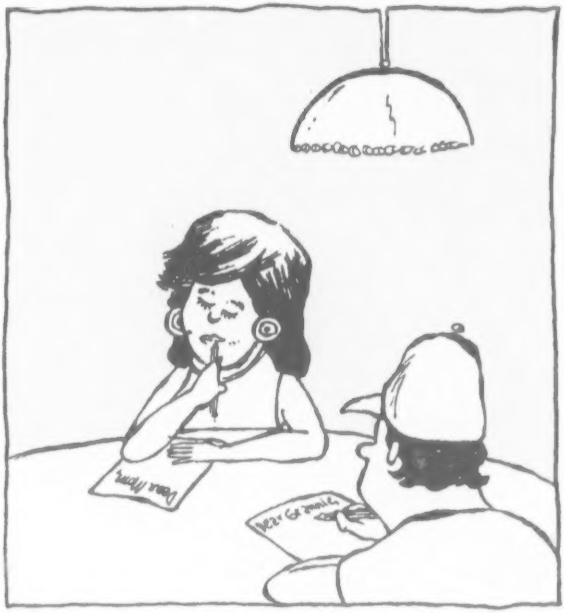
As children move into the higher grades, teachers expect them to assume more responsibility for their own learning. This means that children need to develop a system for organizing their studying — and their time — so they can be successful. As a parent, you can help your older child learn how to organize schoolwork.

"If you fail to plan, you plan to fail," says the old adage. It's true. At the beginning of the school year, help your son plan how to handle schoolwork and other activities he is involved with outside of school. Make a point to ask, "When do you want to schedule your homework time?" Then have your child write down a schedule. You might share with your son how you get yourself organized. Do you make lists? Do you use a calendar? The same system may appeal to your child.



Once your child has a plan, help him learn how to carry it out. Although homework is your child's responsibility, you can show your support in many ways, such as the following:

Respect your child's study time. That means no radio, no TV, no phone calls, no interruptions from friends coming to play.



Work on your own projects near your son. You can pay bills, write letters, or read a book. You can create a sense that "we're all in this together."

Help your child lay out a plan for accomplishing longer projects. Write out a schedule for accomplishing a big task. Breaking a big job down into small tasks not only helps him experience success, but avoids the frustration and stress that comes with trying to do too much in too little time.

It is difficult for my children to come home after school and begin their homework. What can I do to help them complete their assignments within a reasonable time?

After a long day of school, some kids just can't sit still long enough to finish their homework. For your children, "divide and conquer" might be good advice.

First, set a schedule that allows for plenty of breaks. For instance, work for 15 or 20 minutes, and then take a 5-minute break.

Second, help your children break down their homework into manageable pieces. For example, in one session your child might work 15 math problems. In the next, she might look up 10 vocabulary words.

Third, give your children some free time. You might promise to play a favorite game or read a special story or do something together once homework is finished.

Fourth, allow for plenty of individual flexibility within the limits you set. Perhaps your family has the rule that homework must be done before dinner. One child prefers to do homework right after school. The other spends an hour outside before studying. Letting your children choose when they do homework places the responsibility on them for getting it done within your limits. This type of arrangement gives everyone some say in how homework is completed.

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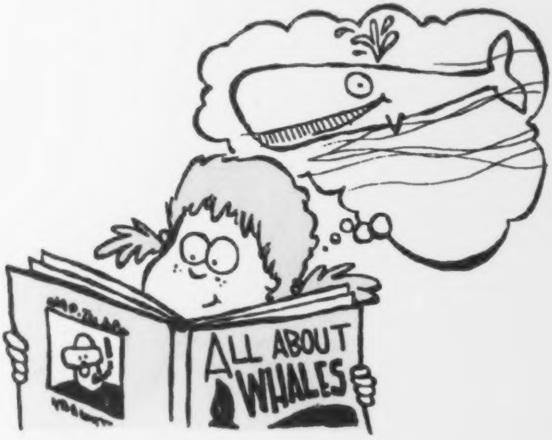
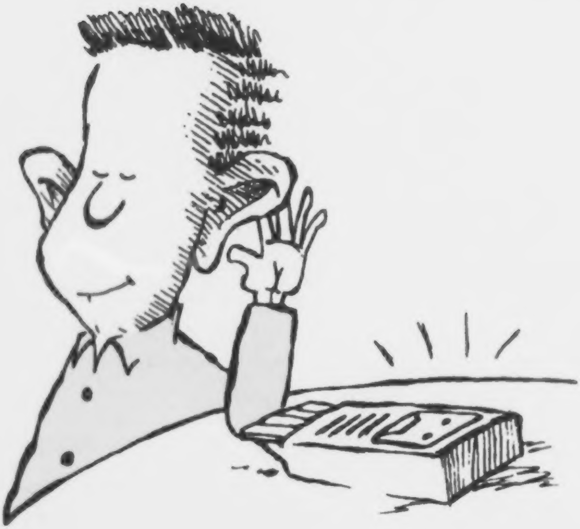
My child's teacher frequently uses the phrase "learning styles" when she offers suggestions to parents about helping their child with school work at home. What does she mean by this?

As a parent, you know many things that make your child unique. Whether it's a talent for music or a great sense of humor, all children have something that makes them special. Kids also learn in different ways. A person's learning style is the way in which that individual learns best. For most children, one of these three learning styles will be strongest:

1. Visual learners learn mainly through seeing things. They learn best when they can see a picture in their minds. If they see something, such as printed directions, pictures, lists, or maps, they can understand it better. They comprehend better when they read what is in a book rather than hearing someone read it to them.





2. Auditory learners learn mainly through hearing. They learn best by listening and responding verbally. They can tell you the answer even though they have only been listening.
3. Kinesthetic learners learn through their bodies. They learn best by handling, touching, and manipulating things. They are more movement-oriented and when they have to sit still, their bodies seem to "go to sleep." One way to involve them is to have them write their thoughts down.

All children use all methods of learning. And no single style of learning is appropriate for all children. As a parent, you can help your children develop a homework style that seems best suited to the way each child learns.

For instance, here are some homework methods you can suggest to help a visual learner:

Write lists of spelling words and post them.

Put up a map of the United States with state capitals highlighted.

Make a time line of important dates.

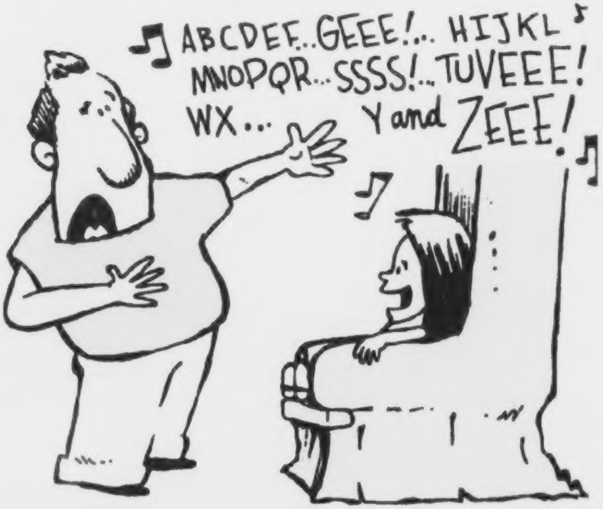
Create flash cards to study vocabulary words or to learn math facts.

The following methods will help an auditory learner:

Make up poems, rhymes, or other memory cues. Repeat them aloud.

Repeat spelling words aloud.

Read important lessons aloud.


ABCDEF...GEEE!... HIJKL
MNOPQR...SSSS!...TUVEEE!
WX... Y and ZEEE!

Tape record important reading assignments, facts, information, and vocabulary and spelling lists so that your child can listen to them on tape.

Kinesthetic learners can use these homework tips:

Move around while studying. Try reading aloud while standing up.

GREAT SPEECHES

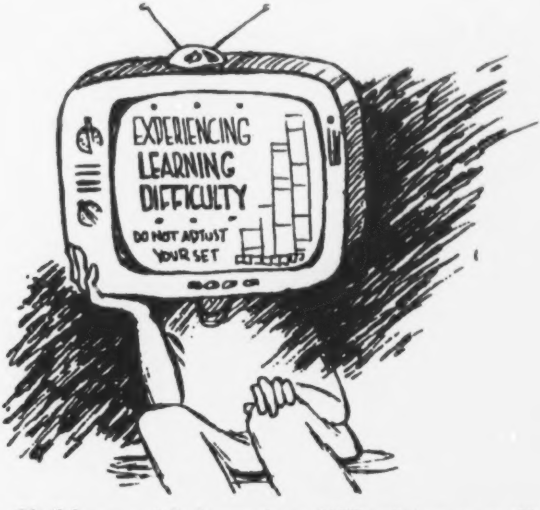
Act out an important lesson from history or perform creative dramatics from a story.

Use a finger to focus the eyes while reading a textbook.

Write and draw diagrams or illustrations for those things worth remembering.

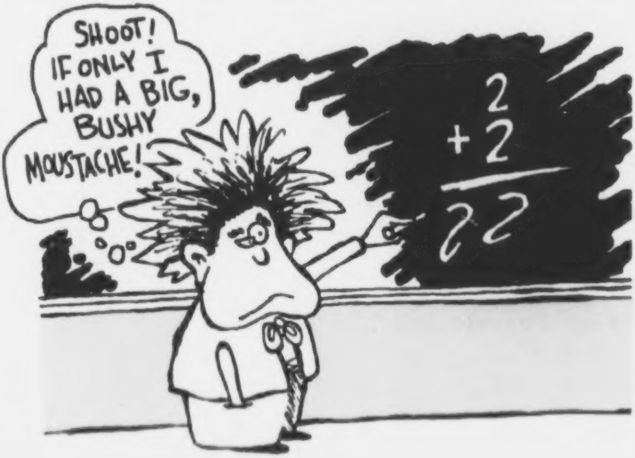
We help our son every evening with school work in some way—reading aloud, math facts, spelling words, and other school-related assignments. He still struggles in school, and his papers and tests show very little improvement. Could he have a learning disability? What can we do?

What's it like to have a learning difficulty? The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests imagining "a distorted television picture caused by technical problems at the station. There is nothing wrong with the TV camera at the station or the TV set in your home. Something in the internal workings of the TV station prevents it from presenting a good picture."



Children with learning difficulties usually can see and hear just fine. The American Academy of Pediatrics says "the problem occurs in the brain after the eyes and ears have done their job."

Some famous and successful people have learning disabilities. For example, Olympic Gold Medal winners Greg Louganis and Bruce Jenner have reading disorders. Einstein had difficulties with arithmetic as a child. There is no sure cure for a learning difficulty. But there are ways to help children cope with these problems.


SHOOT! IF ONLY I HAD A BIG, BUSHY MOUSTACHE!
2
+ 2
22

First, don't automatically suspect that your child has a brain disorder just because he has difficulty with a school subject. He may merely lack the background or the training to handle it.

Second, most schools have specialized testing facilities available to them. Talk to your son's teacher to see if the teacher thinks special testing is needed.

Third, discuss the problem with your doctor or pediatrician. She may have a recommendation for you.

Fourth, many communities have learning clinics that will test children and provide a diagnosis and a plan for you.

Use these various resources to help you.

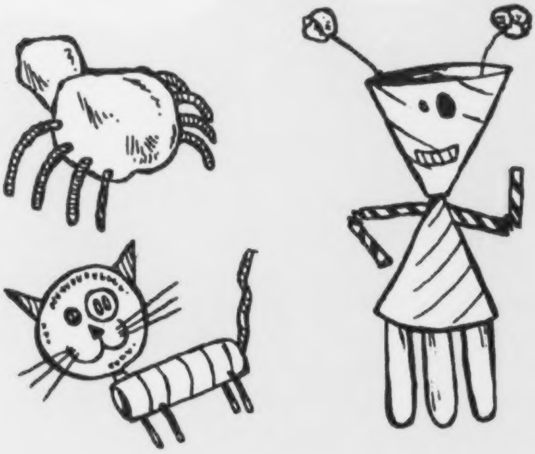
If you have questions you want answered, please write to us and we will try to answer them for you. You may find your question in another issue of *Parents and Children Together.*

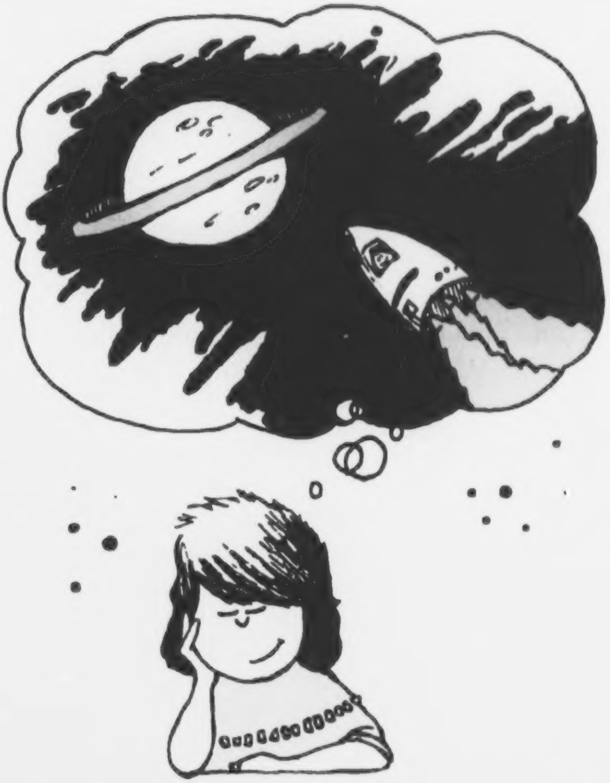
Write to:
Editor, *Parents and Children Together*
Indiana University
2805 E. 10th Street, Suite 150
Bloomington, IN 47408-2698

Activities for Fun and Learning

As parents, we are looking for activities that will benefit our children. Here are some activities for fun and learning that you can enjoy with your children.

> Help your child make different sizes of cylinders and cones using various colors of construction paper. Go for a walk and collect several rocks of assorted sizes and shapes. Decorate with paper, markers, tempera paint, beads, buttons, and fabric to make all kinds of animals, creatures, and objects. Then it may be fun to do some sorting—by color, shape, or size.





Together, think about what the world will be like in the future. Will we live on another planet? Do you think our lives will be dominated by computers? Decide on a time in the future, twenty or fifty years from now. Help your child write down some of her thoughts and predictions about the future world. Keep what she writes in a safe place, and when she grows older your child can read her forecasts to see if any of them came true.

Choose either the first or last letter of your name. Make up sentences in which each word starts with that letter.

Claire can cut cantaloupe.

Bob buys big, blue, bus bumpers.

Mandy makes marvelous, mushy marshmallows.

MARSHMALLOWS

If you repeat your sentence quickly, you will make your own tongue-twister.

These activities are from *My Own Fun*, by Carolyn Buhai Haas and Anita Cross Friedman (Chicago Review Press). This sourcebook is full of activities for parents to do with their children, ages seven through twelve.

Books for Parents and Children

On pages 28–38, we have put together lists of books for parents and children. Some of the books give examples of good study habits and strategies for doing homework. We encourage you to take the time to read a few of these books with your child.

At the beginning of this issue, we mentioned that Side B of the audio tape contains three stories that are designed to be read-along stories. You may want to take some time to look ahead at these stories before you read along with your child. It is also important to talk about the story ahead of time.

Before reading the story, talk about the title or things that might happen in the story, Then—after the story is finished—talk about it again. By the way, if in the middle of the story something funny or exciting or interesting happens, it's O.K. for you to stop the tape and discuss the event, or for you to ask your child questions such as "Would you like to be a vegetarian?" or "What do you suppose it would have been like to live in the Middle Ages?" and then follow it up with a why or why not. These questions make your conversation about the story more natural and valuable.

When you and your child are ready, turn the tape to Side B and listen to the stories as you read along together, or you may read the stories aloud while your child reads along in the booklet.

Books for Parents

Homework without Tears, by Lee Canter and Lee Hausner (Harper & Row Publishers). Presents a program to provide parents with an organized approach to helping their children with homework. Helps develop the skills to create a positive and stress-free learning environment in the home.

How to Help Your Child with Homework, by Marguerite C. Radencich and Jeanne Shay Schumm (Free Spirit Publishing). Includes charts, resources, games, and study tools to help parents assist their children with homework. Topics include reading, spelling, writing, math, science, social studies, reports, and tests.

The Survival Guide for Kids with LD: Learning Differences, by Gary Fisher and Rhoda Cummings (Free Spirit Publishing). A handbook which discusses different types of disorders, and programs at school. Suggests ways to help children deal with learning disabilities, make friends, and cope with negative feelings. Includes a list of resources and organizations for kids.

Books to Read Together

Ages 4-6

All About Where, by Tana Hoban (Greenwillow Books). Each page has a photograph and a list of descriptive words. Children may select specific words that apply to different objects in the picture.

What Neat Feet! by Hana Machotka (Morrow Junior Books). Gives the reader a chance to see a close-up picture of an animal's foot and guess what kind of animal it is. Then the correct answer is given. Also includes information on how each particular animal's feet help the animal live in its own environment.

Meet the Alphabuddies, by Jill Weaver (Morehouse Publishing). Each letter of the alphabet introduces, in rhymed text and illustration, a child whose name begins with that letter. Also presents problems to resolve.

Ages 6-8

Help Is on the Way for: Study Habits, by Marilyn Berry (Childrens Press). Defines studying and explains why it is important. Identifies three practical steps to help organize study time, space, and action plans. Gives suggestions to cope with study problems.

Study Smarts: How to Learn More in Less Time, by Judi Kesselman-Turkel and Franklynn Peterson. Proposes ways to streamline studying. Covers setting goals, taking notes, and decreasing review and reading time. Provides tips for special problems.

The Sierra Club Wayfinding Book, by Vicki McVey (Little, Brown and Company). Describes how humans have developed systems using their senses, landmarks, maps, navigation, and signs in the natural world to find their way around. Includes activities, games, and experiments illustrating the principles of wayfinding.

Ages 8-10

You Can Speak Up in Class, by Sara Gilbert (Beech Tree Books). Addresses feelings of discomfort and anxiety that students have when speaking in the classroom. Presents reasons for these problems and gives practical ways to deal with them.

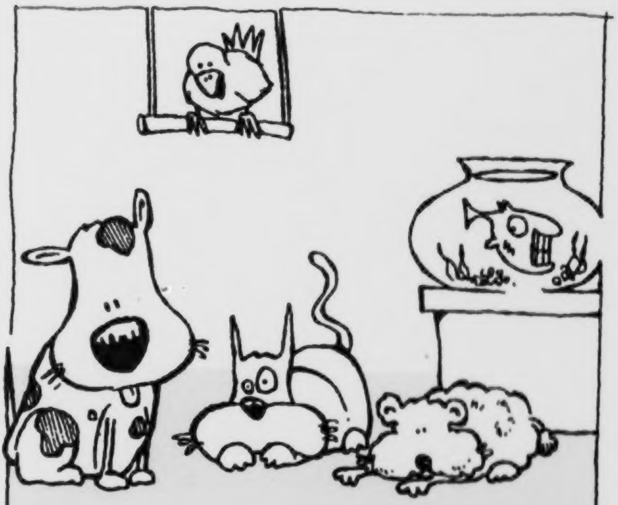
Tracking the Facts: How to Develop Research Skills, by Claire McInerney (Lerner Publications Company). Covers selecting a topic, using the library, interviewing, and computer searching. Also provides information on taking notes, organizing an outline, and writing up the research results.

Chemically Active! Experiments You Can Do at Home, by Vicki Cobb. Learn the principles of chemistry by trying some of these experiments. Most of the materials can be found in the home. Includes some magic tricks and detective adventures.

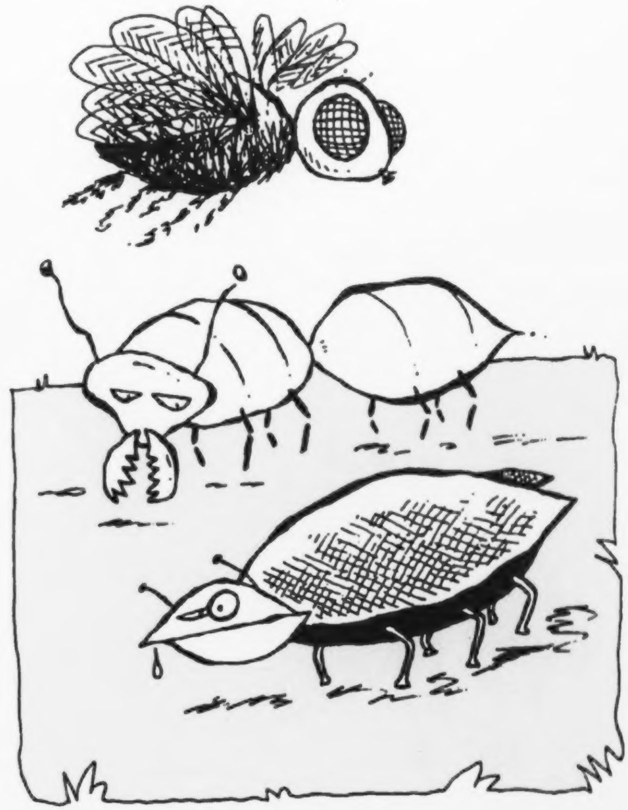
Books for Your Children to Read by Themselves

Ages 4-6

Pet Animals, by Lucy Cousins (Tambourine Books). Shows animals children might have for pets. Also gives the word for each animal. This is a board book which makes page turning easy for little hands.



Ten, Nine, Eight, by Molly Bang (Mulberry Books). Presents some of the different objects found in a child's bedroom while she is getting ready to go to bed. Numbers items from ten to one.

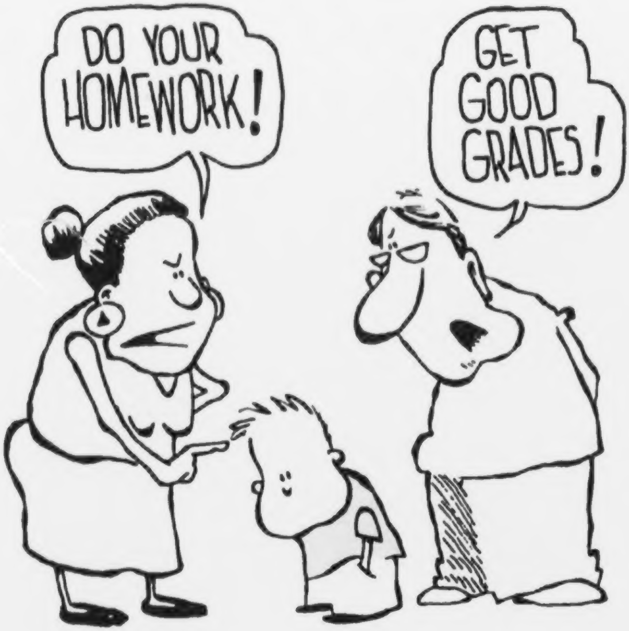


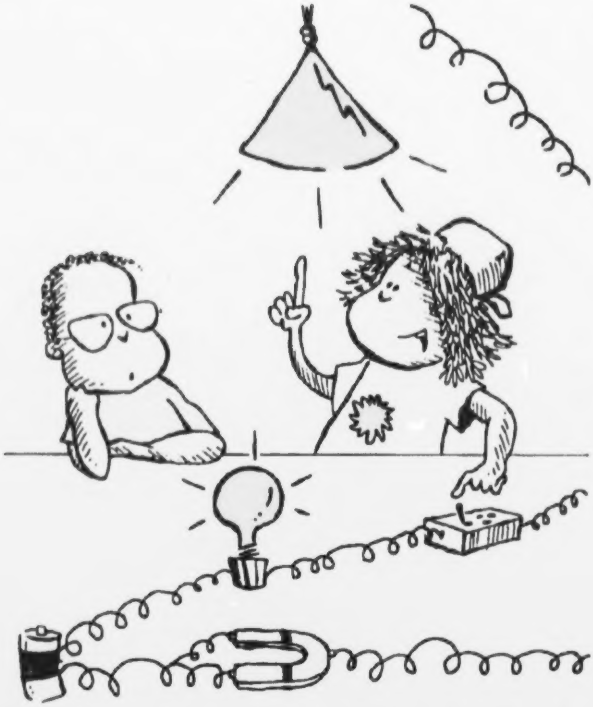
The Icky Bug Alphabet Book, by Jerry Pallotta (Charlesbridge Publishing). Displays "icky bugs" for each letter of the alphabet. Large, precise illustrations and descriptions accompany each creature.

Ages 6-8

What to Do When Your Mom or Dad Says..."Do Your Homework!" (and Schoolwork), by Joy Wilt Berry (Childrens Press). Explains why children are given homework and the benefits of doing homework. Gives suggestions on how to do homework well and learn from it.

What to Do When Your Mom or Dad Says..."Get Good Grades!" by Joy Wilt Berry (Childrens Press). Defines the purpose of tests and grades. Presents practical skills that will enable students to get the most out of tests and grades.


DO YOUR HOMEWORK!
GET GOOD GRADES!



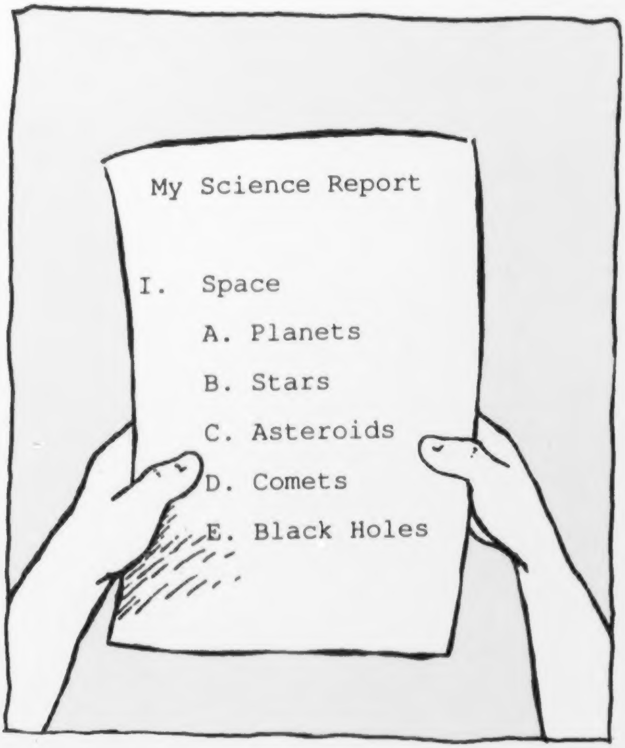
Blinkers and Buzzers, by Bernie Zubrowski (Beech Tree Books). Includes experiments and projects that deal with electricity and magnetism. Most of the materials needed for the projects are found in the home.

Ages 8-10

Stories to Solve, by George Shannon (Beech Tree Books). A collection of brief folktales in which there is a mystery or a problem to solve. The puzzles can be solved by using common sense or careful observation.

How to Be School Smart, by Elizabeth James and Carol Barkin. Examines different learning styles. Suggests ways to get organized. Includes chapters on homework and tests.

How to Write a Great School Report, by Elizabeth James and Carol Barkin. Guides the student through the different steps of writing a report. Outlines choosing a topic, finding information, taking notes, preparing to write, writing, editing, and proofreading.

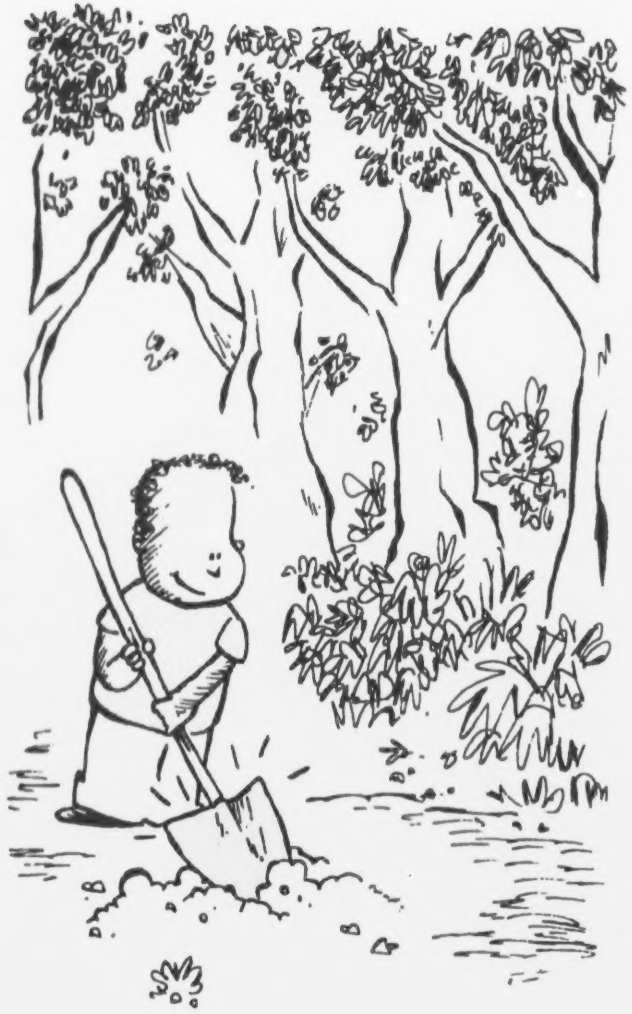

My Science Report
I. Space
A. Planets
B. Stars
C. Asteroids
D. Comets
E. Black Holes

Magazines

Also ask the librarian for the following magazines for children:

- *Creative Kids*
- *Cricket*
- *Children's Playmate*
- *Dolphin Log*
- *Go! Girls Only!*
- *Highlights for Children*
- *Hot Dog*
- *Kid City*
- *Peanut Butter*
- *Sports Illustrated for Kids*
- *Turtle Magazine for Preschool Kids*
- *U*S* Kids*

Read-along Stories



Boy with a Shovel

by David L. Harrison

Things to do *before* reading the story

This story mentions many of the animals of the forest that dig holes and burrows and dens. Talk about all of the forest animals you know that like to dig in the earth. Write down on a piece of paper a list of the animals you think of. As you read the story, see if you thought of all the digging animals the author mentions.

Once there was a boy who got a shovel for his birthday. Right away he took it to the woods to dig a hole.

He had not been digging long when he uncovered a mouse hole.

"Rats!" squeaked Mouse. "You've ruined my house!"

"I'm sorry," said the boy. "I was only digging a hole with my new shovel."

"Accidents happen to anyone," said Mouse. "I like to dig holes myself. I'll help you."

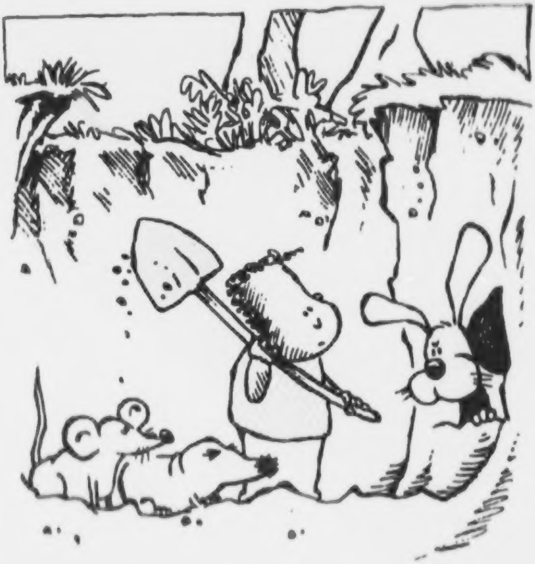
With both of them digging, the hole grew deeper. Before long they uncovered a mole's tunnel.

"Oh!" mumbled Mole. "You've ruined my hole!"

"Mouse and I are digging," said the boy. "We're really sorry about your tunnel. Would you like to dig with us?"

"I suppose I could," muttered Mole. "I'm pretty good at digging."

With three of them working, the hole grew even bigger. Before they knew it, they had uncovered a rabbit munching lettuce in his burrow.



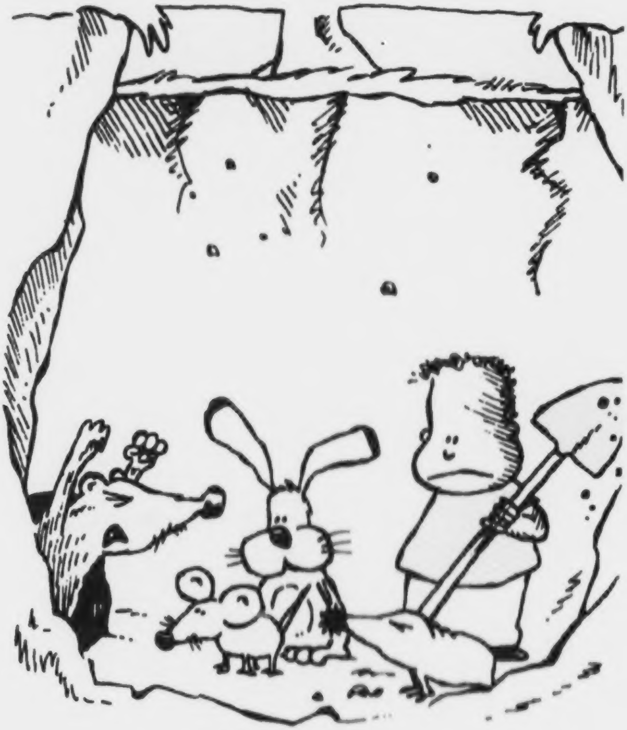
"You've knocked dirt on my food! How rude!" cried Rabbit.

"We didn't mean to," the boy said. "I'm digging a hole with Mouse and Mole."

"That's all right," Rabbit said. "I was nearly finished anyway. I'll help you."

The four dug and dug. The hole grew wider and deeper. Pretty soon they dug into a badger's den and woke him.

"Look out!" snapped Badger. "My den's caved in!"



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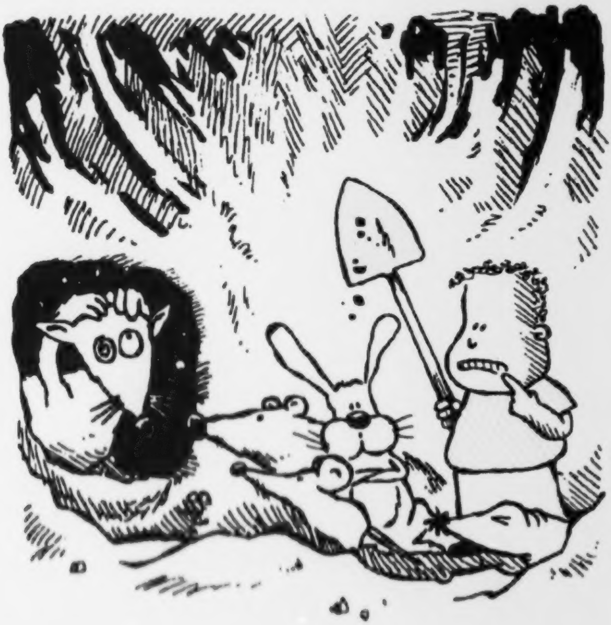
"We're terribly sorry," said the boy. "I'm digging a hole, and Mouse and Mole and Rabbit are helping me."

"Then I'll help, too," said Badger. "I don't like to brag, but I can dig a better hole than this using one paw."

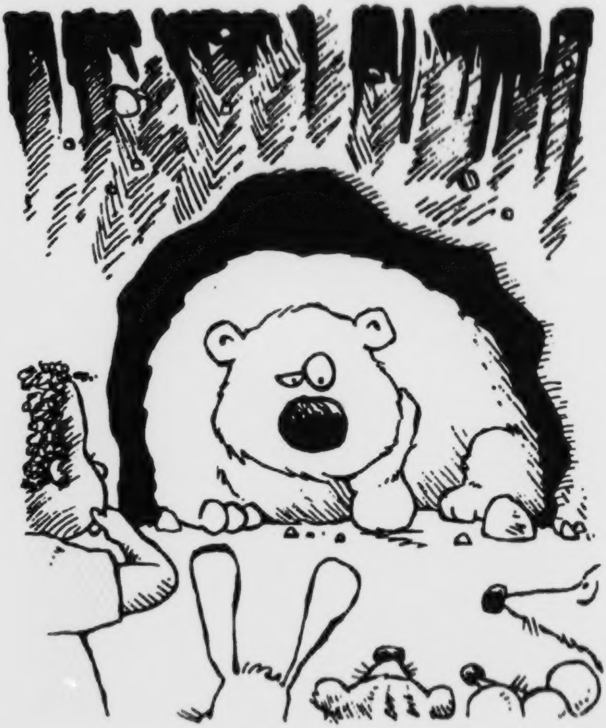
With five digging, the hole got still bigger and still wider and still deeper. They dug so wide and deep that they uncovered a fox hiding in his den.



"Help!" Fox yelped. "Now the hounds can find me! You're not hunters, are you?"

"No," the boy said. "We're diggers. See."

"Hmmm," said Fox. "Then I'd better dig with you. If a hound comes around maybe he won't notice me."



The boy and Mouse and Mole and Rabbit and Badger and Fox dug all morning. They dug their hole so wide and deep that they uncovered a bear's den.

"What are you doing up there?" growled Bear.

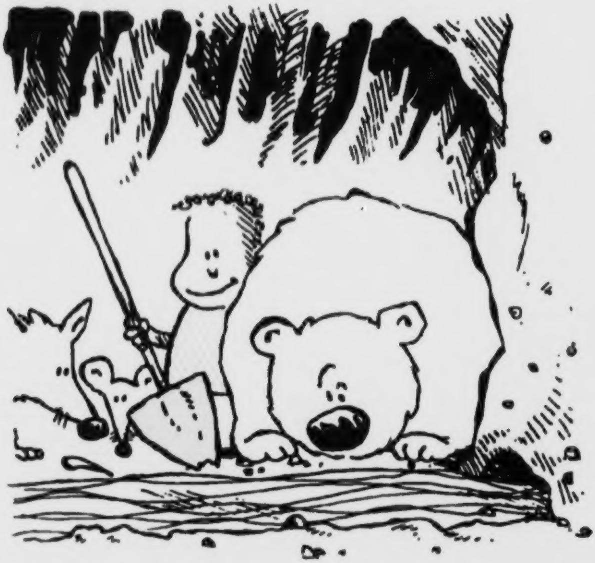
"Digging a hole," said the boy. "Everyone is helping me. Isn't it a fine hole?"

Bear walked around the hole.

"Not bad," he sniffed. "Not bad. With my help, this could become a hole to be proud of."

And he began to dig.

With the boy and Mouse and Mole and Rabbit and Badger and Fox and Bear working together, they dug the grandest hole anyone in the forest had ever seen.



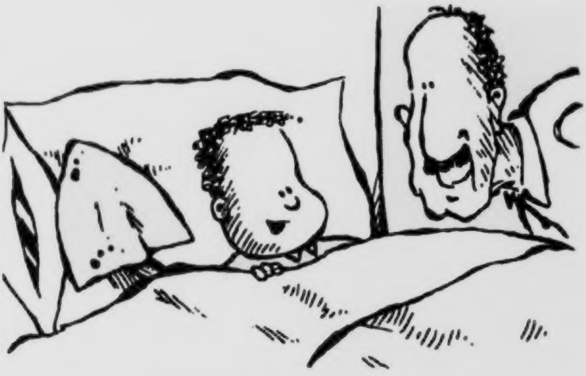
They dug until they came to a clear stream. The stream poured into the hole and turned it into a pond.

"I can't dig any more now," the boy said. "I have to go home. Thank you for helping me."

"Thank you for the pond," the animals answered. "We needed one."That night the boy's father asked him what he had done all day.

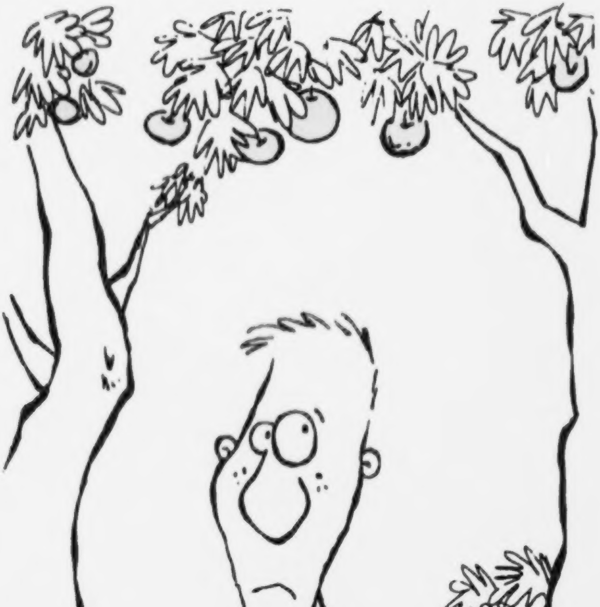
"Nothing much," he said. "Except I dug a hole with my new shovel."

Then he fell asleep.



Things to Do after Reading the Story

The boy and the forest animals made a pond with just a shovel and their paws. Talk about ways that man-made lakes and ponds are made in real life. You can find information on this subject at the local library. Also, talk about other forest animals that behave like "natural engineers" by digging and building homes and other structures.



Rebel Cows: A Victim's Story

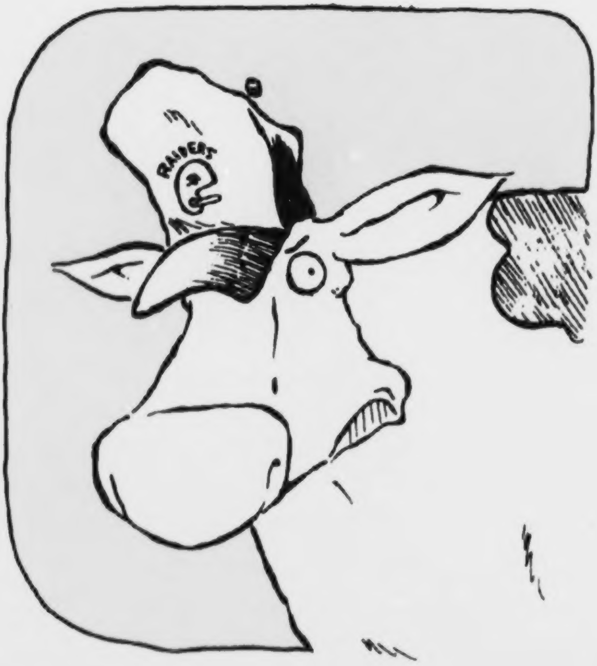
by Alex Bagosy

Things to Do before Reading the Story

Cows are gentle creatures who are strict vegetarians. This means that they eat only plants, or "vegetation." Talk about animals that eat meat and animals that eat only plants. What are some of the differences between the way meat-eating animals and plant-eating animals act? Why do some people think it is healthy for people and good for the environment to be a vegetarian?

One crisp fall day, while walking down a quiet country road, I heard the sound of footsteps behind me. I had thought I was alone. I walked faster, wondering who could be following me. The speed of the footsteps also increased. A shiver ran down my spine when I remembered that this area was the most common spot for cow attacks. Why had I ventured here alone?

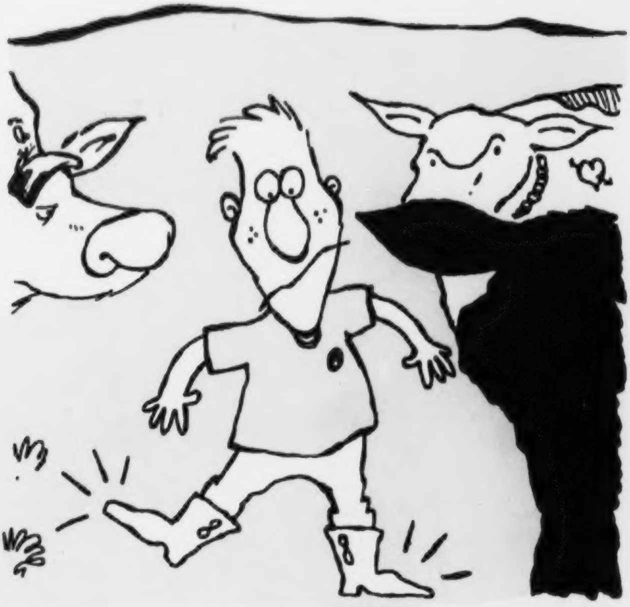
Fighting back panic, I realized that I'd have to turn around and face whatever or whoever was



following me. I gasped when I turned and saw a teenage steer, maliciously chewing his cud and insolently staring back at me. I was horrified still more when I noticed a tattoo on his right shin that read "Hell's Holstein." Underneath the words was a picture of a T-bone steak with a skull and lightning bolt across it. The dry leaves on the ground rustled and I looked about me to see that I was surrounded by several cows. These were not your average docile country cows—these were gang cows!

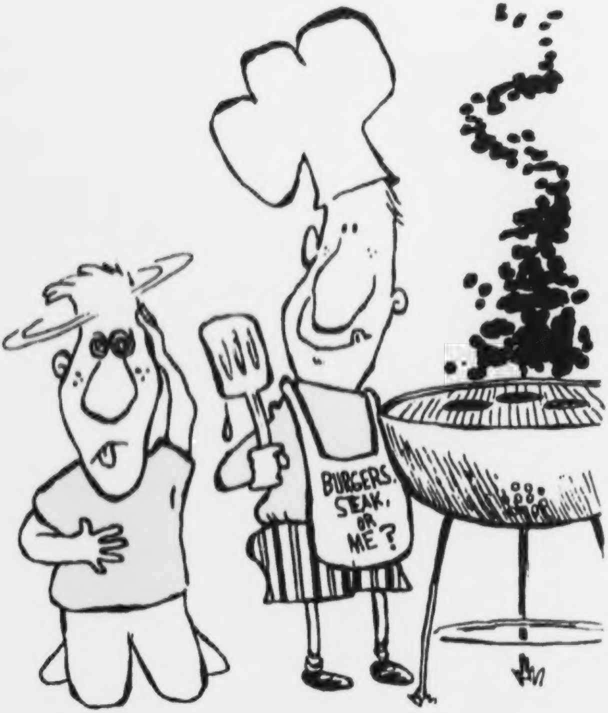
The steer must have been the leader because he wore his Raider's cap tilted to the left.

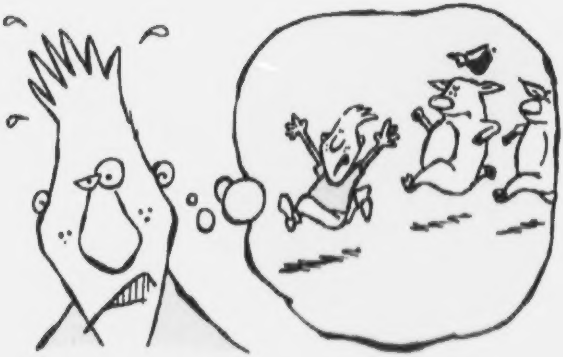
"Why me? What do you want?" I stammered. They continued to stare malevolently, all together responding with a rebel-like moo. I gulped as I looked frantically around and then down to see—MY GENUINE COWHIDE BOOTS!



I broke through the circle and ran with all my might, vaulting over a fence and scaling a tree. Agitated, they mooed in anger and continued to mill around the fence, all the while taunting me with snorts from their hairy nostrils. Finally, that evening, along about milking time, they sauntered off. I had escaped their beefy, evil clutches.

When the last cow disappeared from view, I climbed down, still shaking. After reporting the incident to the police, I knew I had to get on with my life. But I began to hear voices in the middle of the night, even though I was fully awake. Was it a long low rumble of thunder or was that mooing that I heard? I felt weak in the knees whenever I was confronted with dairy products, and the smell of beef sizzling on the grill made me nauseous.

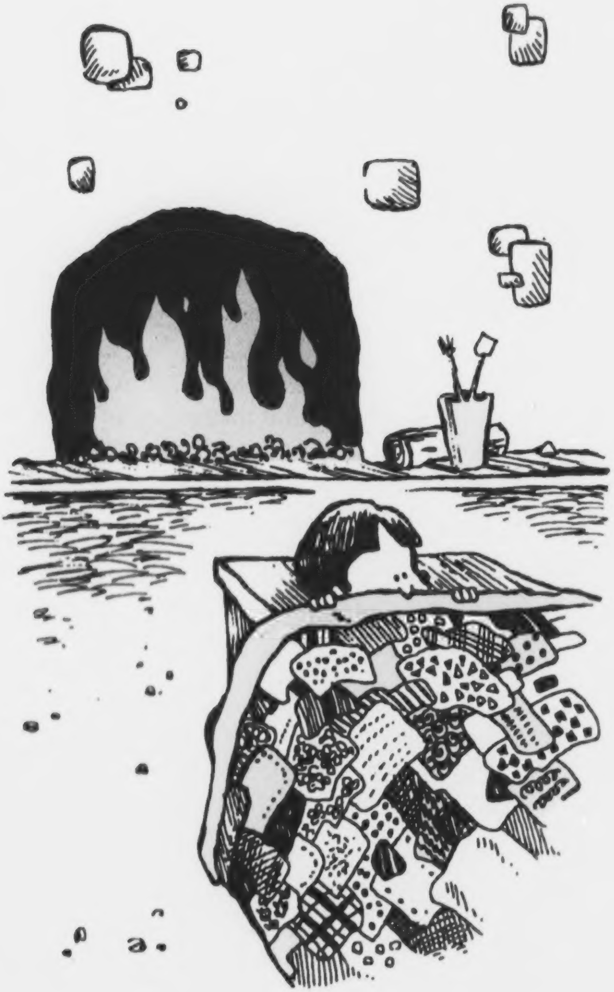




I couldn't go on that way—what kind of life is it when you're tortured by memories of a cow gang attack? I went into therapy and after much rehabilitation, I was able to sing "Old MacDonald Had a Farm" without breaking into a cold sweat. I look forward to a future free of the menacing sound of cud chewing—as a vegetarian. But I never go into an orchard after dark, even with a group, and I refuse to weed my garden unless accompanied by at least two other people.

Things to Do after Reading the Story

The cow gang acted angrily toward the boy in the story because he was wearing cowhide boots. Why do you think that was so? A lot of humans also don't like it when people wear clothing or shoes made of leather or fur. Talk about why we should be kind to animals. Think of ways we can protect animals and still keep people fed and clothed.



The Innkeeper's Boy

by Diane Brooks Pleninger

Things to Do before Reading the Story

This story is set in the Middle Ages, when there were queens and kings. It contains words that you might not know. Get a pencil and paper ready. Jot down the unusual words and look them up later. Or, as you read, try to figure out what they mean from the context of the story.

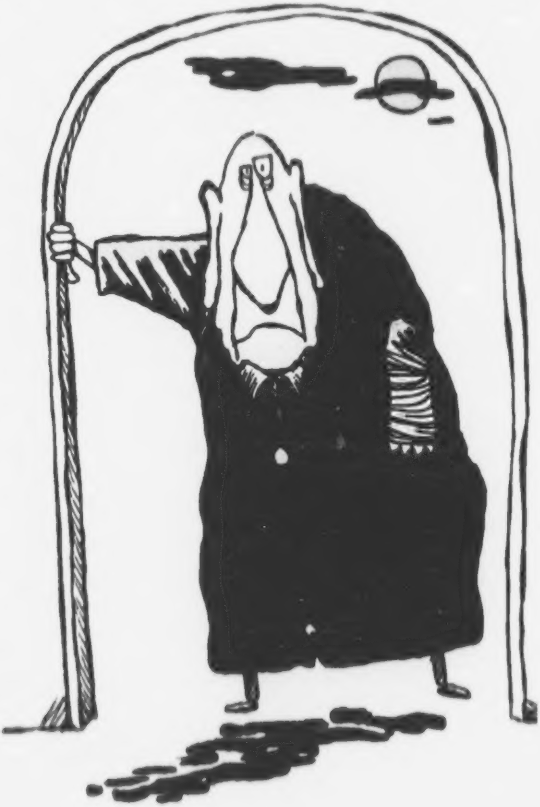
Rain fell like arrows in the night, hailing down upon the roof of the inn at Clary Crossing until the thatch grew damp and heavy and the roof beams groaned under its weight. The fire sputtered in the chimney, and steaming horses whickered and snuffed in the stalls.

A boy lay wrapped in quilts on a bench by the hearth. It was his job to open the door to midnight travelers. The lazy innkeeper lay abed in an upstairs room, loving his sleep.

At first, the boy thought the faint pounding he heard was his dream. On the fourth knock, he awoke and stumbled to the door. Before him stood a tall stranger in a black cloak, an old man pale as death.

"I can go no farther," gasped the man and fell into a chair near the fire.

Luc, for that was the boy's name, hastened to stir the embers and pour a beaker of ale. But the man wanted only to talk.

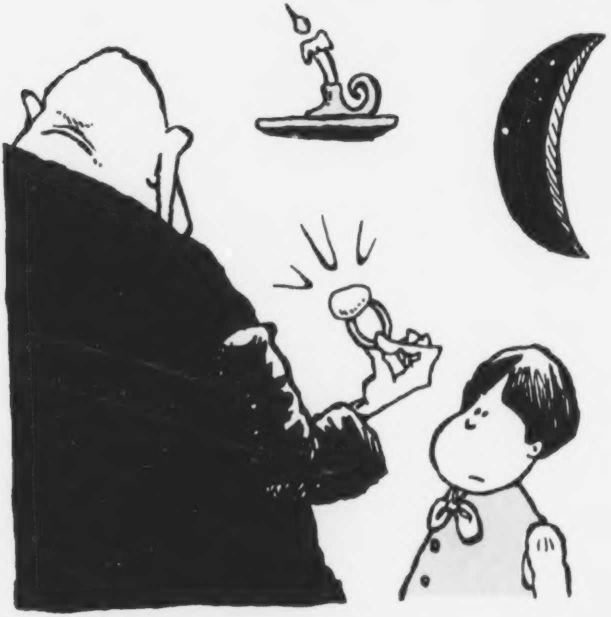


"The king is dead," he said. Luc was silent, but his eyes grew wide.

"His son, Prince Albion of Picardy, is his rightful heir. But the king's brother, Mogor, the cruel Duke of Artois, covets the throne. He will stop at nothing to claim it."

"Will there be war?" Luc asked.

"Except for this," the man answered, and he held up a small, bright object that glimmered even in the dark room. Luc took it in his hand. It was a gold ring, set with an egg-shaped stone that changed color before his eyes, turning from amethyst to emerald to carmine in the firelight.



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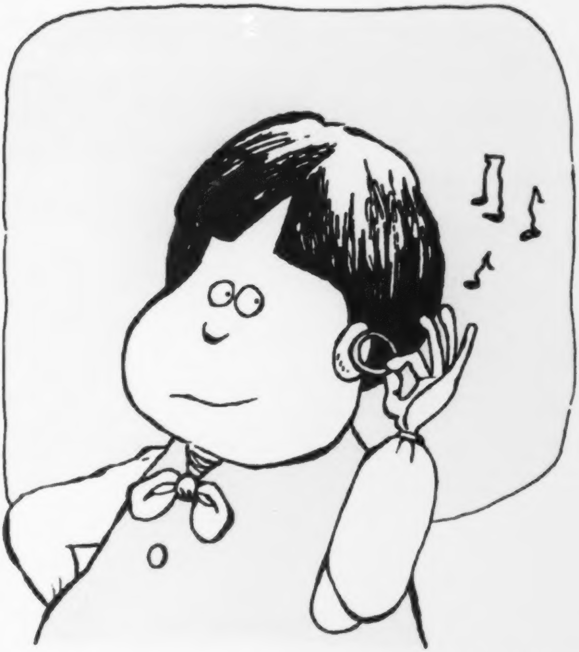


“Whoever wears this shall claim the throne of Picardy in peace. It is a song stone. Listen to it.”

Luc raised it to his ear and, for an instant, thought he heard a faint sound, like a distant flute.

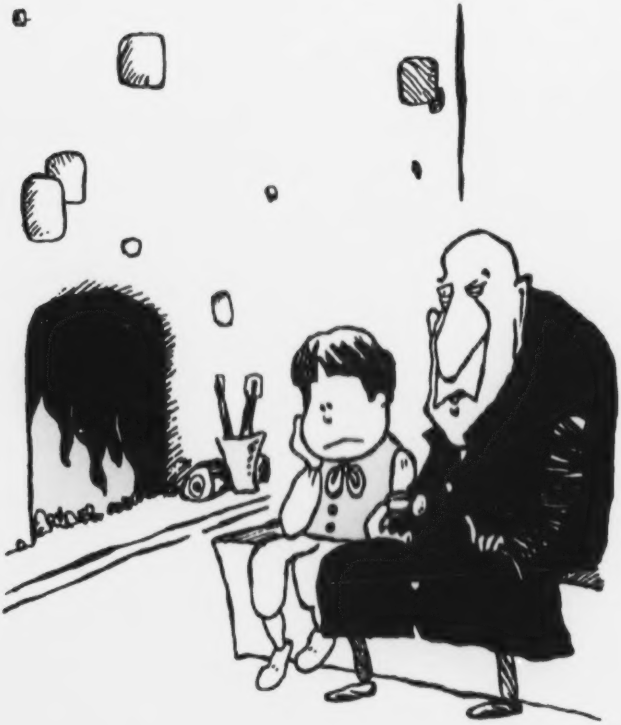
“The king asked me to carry the ring to Prince Albion at Amiens. But Mogor’s henchmen have hounded me at every milepost. I am less than a day ahead of them. And I am growing weak.”

“Can you not hide from them?” Luc asked excitedly. “I know many good hiding places in these hills!”

"No one who carries the ring can hide from them. They have captured the silver kestrel, a bird that hears the song of the stone wherever it is and can lead them to it. Were it buried in the deepest shaft, they would find it."

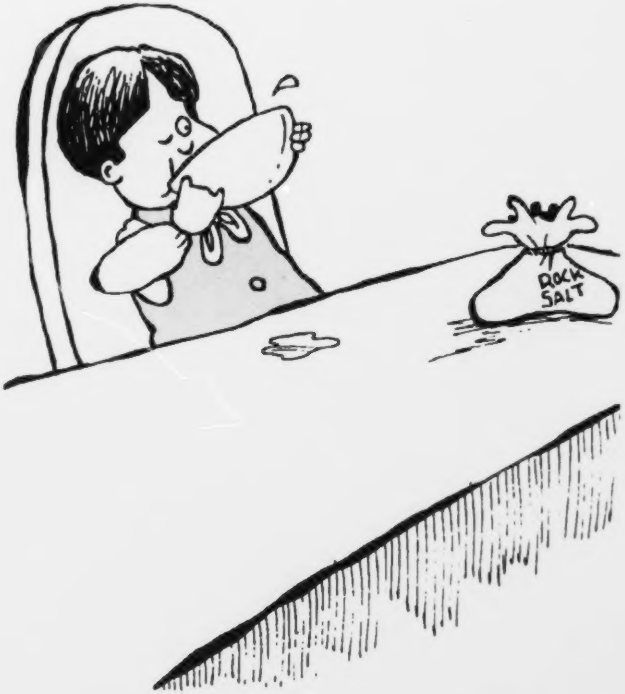
The man and the boy sat in silence, pondering this dilemma.

"My strength has left me," said the man at length. "But you are young. Carry this ring to Albion. He will certainly reward you."



Luc bent to stir the embers. What the man had not seen was that the boy was lame. He walked only slowly and with difficulty. How could he outdistance Mogor's henchmen on their strong horses?

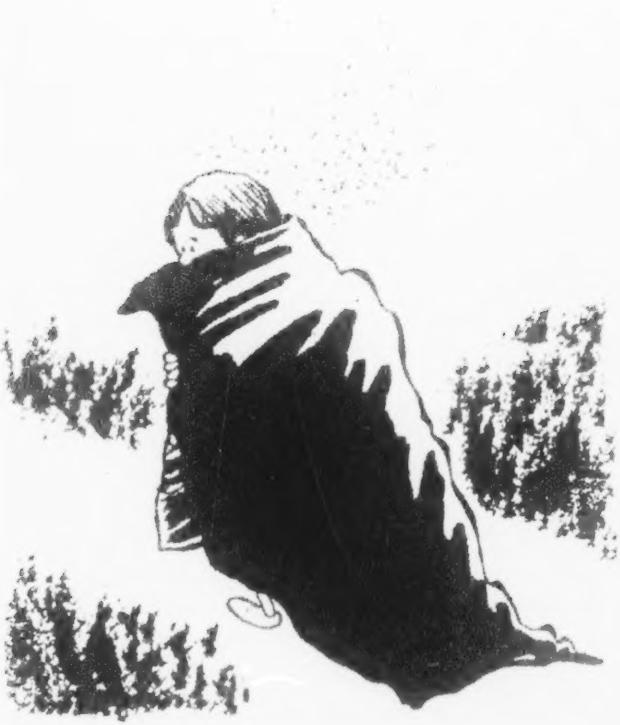
When Luc turned back to tell him this, the man had vanished, leaving only his black cloak on the chair and the cold ring in Luc's hand.



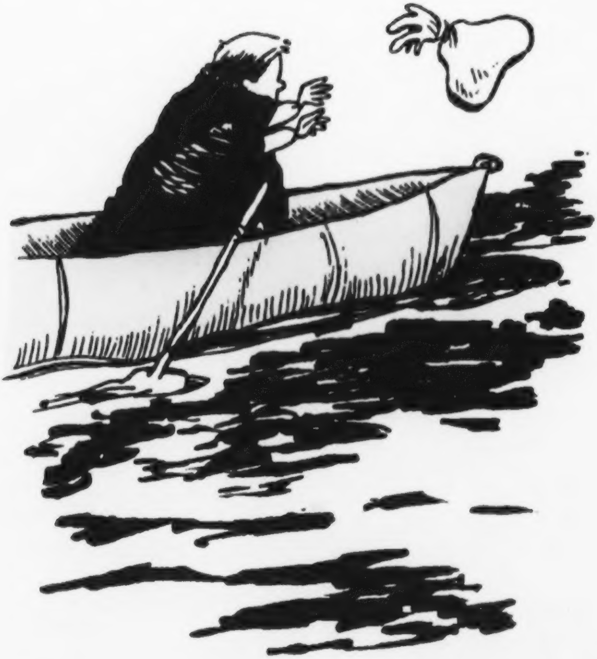
The next morning, Luc rose early, before the innkeeper was afoot. Within his palm lay the ring, its stone changing from azure to amber to coral. He crept into the kitchen and drank a bowl of milk. He must decide what to do.

As he thought, Luc's eye lit upon a small, coarse sack half full of rock salt. An idea began to take shape in his mind. Perhaps there was a way. He took up the sack and dropped the ring inside, burying it in the salt. Then he went to the ale room and gathered up a handful of the corks the innkeeper used to stop his bottles.

Luc filled the sack with corks and drew the strings tight. Then he wrapped himself in the stranger's black cloak and slipped out the kitchen door.



The pale, gold light of morning streamed through the mist. Slowly, Luc made his way to a lake not far from the crossing. It was a small lake, but so deep it had never been sounded. Some said it was an ancient quarry left by the Romans. Others said it was the threshold to the underworld.



Now Luc untied a small boat and rowed swiftly to the middle of the lake. He said a quick prayer that he might be right in his calculations. Then he threw the sack of salt into the deep, black water. In an instant it sank, leaving a string of bubbles and then nothing.

In the late afternoon, the cavaliers of Artois galloped into Clary Crossing. Their gold and scarlet liveries were streaked with dust and sweat, and the hoofs of their foaming steeds struck sparks in the lengthening shadows.

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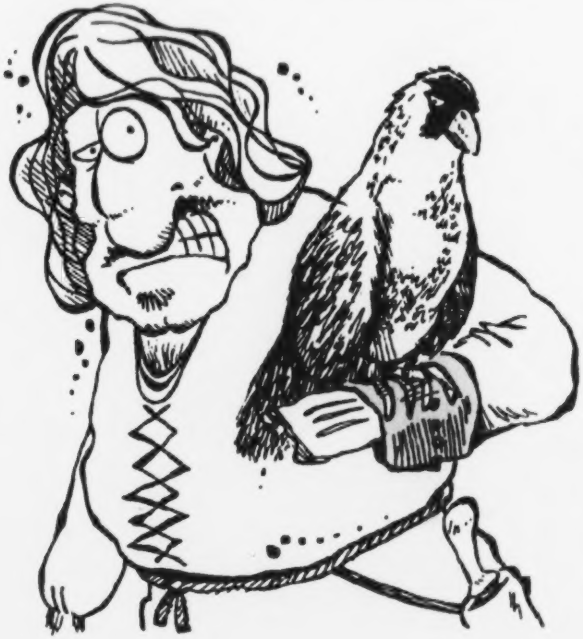
Astride the leather wristlet of one rode the hooded silver kestrel. The bird gave forth an angry cry as the horses drew to a halt before the inn. The innkeeper came to the doorway and wrung his hands and whimpered.

"What guests did you have last night, man?" cried the leader. "Speak or taste my blade!"

"None, none, none!" gibbered the innkeeper. "Nary a one, one, one!"

"A man in black has passed this way," challenged the leader. "The kestrel does not lie!" And the bird rose up on its talons with a screech."



Come in, then. Search! Look anywhere you wish. Ask my boy, my only servant. He will tell you. No one stopped last night."

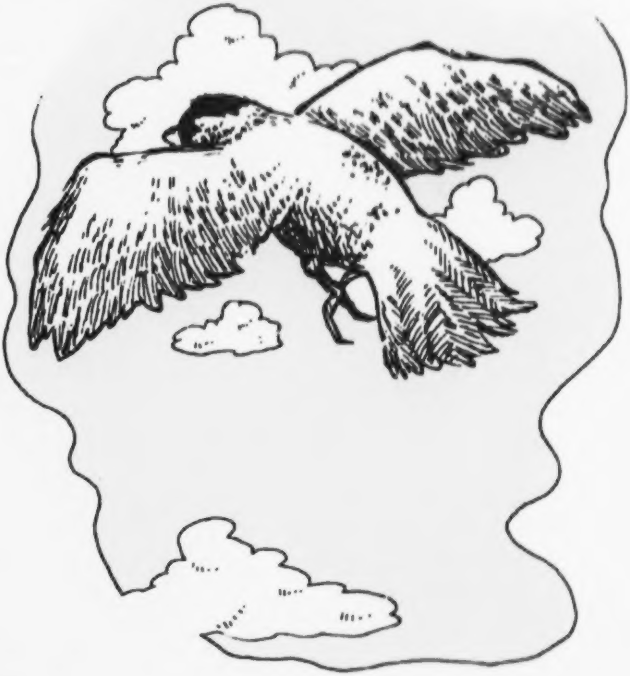
But the cavaliers had no use for a mere boy. Instead, they turned to the mob of villagers that had gathered.

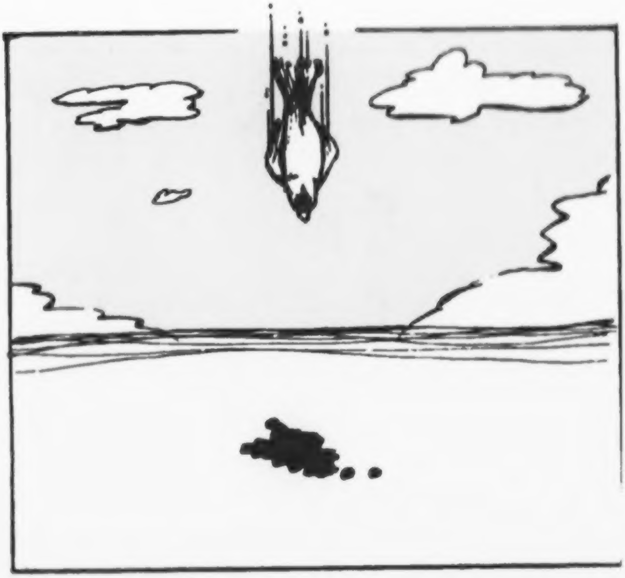
"The king is dead! Mogor shall rule, and his enemies shall perish! A gold sovereign to any of you who can take us to a tall man in a black cape."

A peasant stepped forth. "At dawn this morning, your lordship, I saw a man in black go down to the lake. I cannot say I saw him return."

With a shout, the duke's men hastened to the water's edge.

"Release the bird!" ordered the leader, and the keeper slipped the black hood from the kestrel's head. For a moment, its fierce eyes shone like diamonds. Then with a rush of wings, the bird left its perch and began to soar.

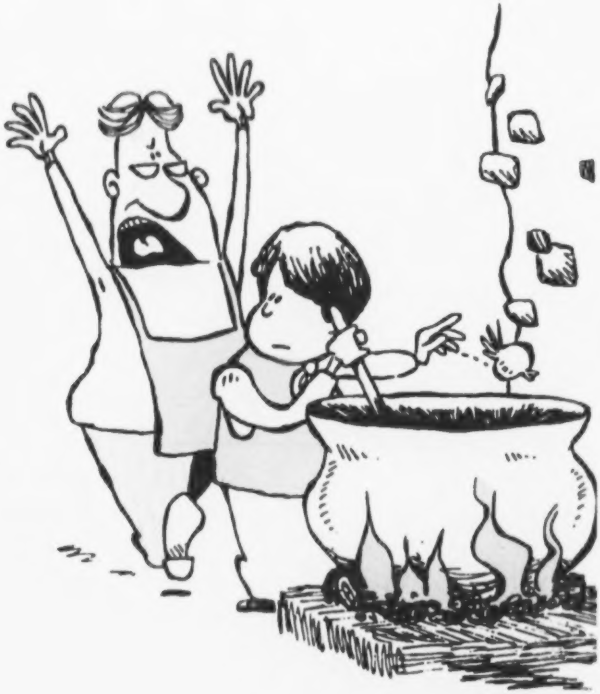




The people watched it climb higher and ever higher over the dark lake. At last, when it had become a mere speck against the sky, the bird folded its wings and with a great, distant, keening shriek fell from the blue like a thunderbolt. Down, down it sped toward the deep black center of the lake, and there it sliced the water like a knife and broke its neck and drowned.

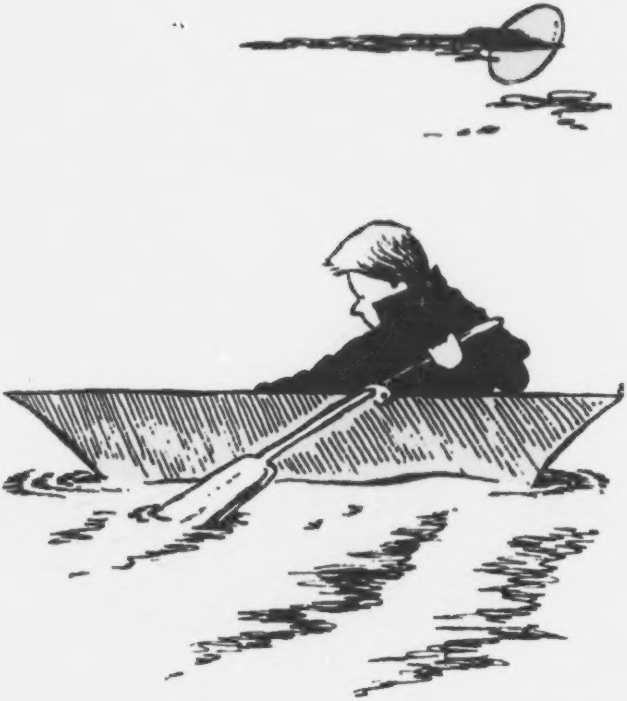
A cry of consternation went up from the crowd, for they saw the cavaliers of Artois turn their steeds back toward Arras and they knew that war was inevitable. Late into the night, candles smoked in the cottages of the crossing as the people gathered their treasures and prepared to hide all that they possessed in hillside caves, away from the plundering soldiers of Mogor.

The inn was the busiest spot of all. There the villagers gathered to await the word of war.



"Where is my salt?" shouted the innkeeper to his boy as he stirred the steaming stewpot. But Luc kept his counsel, saying nothing, and merely threw another garlic in the pot to raise the flavor. Late that evening, Luc rowed to the center of the deep lake and searched the moonlit surface. But he found nothing.

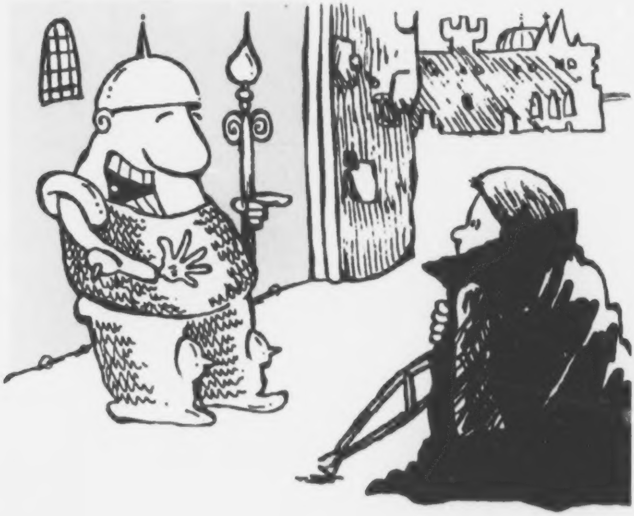
"Where are my corks?" roared the innkeeper the next night. Again, Luc kept his counsel and rolled leaves to plug the ale bottles. Again, he rowed out onto the lake in the moonlight. And again, he found nothing. His heart began to sink. Had he been wrong? Was the ring gone forever? Would there be war?



"Where is my scullery boy?" thundered the innkeeper on the third night. "Luc! Luc! Luc?"

But there was no answer. For that evening, Luc had rowed to the center of the lake. He had found a dark shape bobbing on the water and had fished it out in silent triumph and pulled open the drawstrings. Among the corks, a tiny moon shining in its onyx stone, lay the ring. The heavy rock salt had all dissolved, and the corks had brought the sack back to the surface.

Some days later, a young lad with a crutch and an oversized black cloak stood outside the palace at Amiens and demanded to see Prince Albion. Everyone laughed, but he insisted. When he was finally admitted, he gave the prince the ring and told him all that had happened. The prince embraced him and led him to his own table. He gave him roast quail, spiced oranges, and sweet puddings to eat, and a bath and a soft feather bed for his rest.



In reward for his cleverness and courage, Luc lived ever after in King Albion's household. There he studied and learned much. And it was soon forgotten that the famous Luc of Amiens, scientist, statesman, and scholar, was once the scullery boy at the inn at Clary Crossing.

Things to Do after Reading the Story

The magic stone made sounds that people and animals could hear. Luc found a clever way to hide the stone. But he could not keep the kestrel from hearing it, even when it was at the bottom of a lake. Imagine that Luc and the stone were around today. Talk about ways that Luc could have kept the kestrel from hearing the song of the stone. Be creative. Think about how you could use modern technology and materials.

We hope you have had fun with these stories!

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Books of Special Interest to Parents

How Can I Prepare My Young Child for Reading? by Paula C. Grinnell. Presents ideas to assist parents in preparing their children for reading. Focuses on children from birth through kindergarten. ($1.75)

You Can Help Your Young Child with Writing, by Marcia Baghban. Suggests methods parents can use to help develop their children's writing at home. Offers writing and reading activities. ($1.75)

Beginning Literacy and Your Child, by Steven B. Silvern and Linda R. Silvern. Recommends ways parents can participate in the development of their children's literacy. Provides activities for talking, reading, writing, and listening. ($1.75)

Helping Your Child Become a Reader, by Nancy L. Roser. Provides suggestions for parents to help them encourage their children to read. Offers several practical activities for parents. ($1.75)

Creating Readers and Writers, by Susan Mandel Glazer. Suggests that parents: (1) encourage the use of language; (2) build positive attitudes toward reading, writing, and speaking; and (3) demonstrate the purposes of literacy. Includes book suggestions classified by age groups. ($1.75)

You Can Encourage Your High School Student to Read, by Jamie Myers. Offers practical ideas parents can use to encourage their teenagers to read more. Shows how reading can serve adolescents' needs, and presents future needs that reading can fulfill. ($1.75)

Your Child's Vision Is Important by Caroline Beverstock. Discusses how vision affects school work, how different eye problems affect vision, and how to spot vision problems. Includes suggestions for dealing with vision difficulties. ($1.75)

101 Ideas to Help Your Child Learn to Read and Write, by Mary and Richard Behm. Ideas are presented to help parents use resources from around the home to promote literacy. The activities are educationally sound and fun for the parent and child to do together. ($6.50)

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Family Focus: Reading and Learning Together

The International Reading Association and a number of other sponsoring organizations have joined forces to create a training program packet called "Family Focus: Reading and Learning Together." The program is designed for parents and children in elementary and middle schools. Family Focus assists parents in teaching children to develop good literacy habits and skills through newspaper reading. The program centers on newspapers because they have been shown to be effective instructional tools for children and adolescents of all ages.

The project offers suggestions and materials for reading specialists or Newspapers in Education (NIE) coordinators to use in conducting 90-minute parent-training programs. The programs are meant to help parents learn new and innovative ways to encourage their children and young teens to read, discuss, and think more creatively and effectively.

Besides their proven value as teaching tools, newspapers have the advantage of being a readily available and varied source of information and ideas to use in family reading and discussions. Parents can easily pick up a paper and model reading behavior in the home, thus encouraging conversations and expanding their children's awareness of people, places, current events, and cultures around the world.

In a typical Family Focus program, parents are invited to attend a meeting, usually at their local school, where reading association members and NIE specialists train them in techniques for working with their children and young adolescents at home. One Family Focus meeting a year is planned at first, but participating schools are encouraged to schedule more sessions per year on their own. The target audience for the first year of a three-year program includes children in first through third grades. In the second and third years, older students are targeted to be added to the project.

The Family Focus packet consists of a leaders' guide containing outlines for four sample 90-minute programs, a parent resource brochure that describes ways parents can reinforce techniques learned in Family Focus workshops, a flier for teachers that discusses the purposes and methods of the parent program, a series of model letters promoting the program to parents, a Family Focus evaluation card for program organizers, public service announcements and advertisements for use in newspapers and radio, and other materials for the first year of the project. All of the packet's documents are printed clearly on high-quality paper and are easily reproducible.

Available from ANPA Foundation, Box 17407 Dulles Airport, Washington, D.C. 20041; (703) 648-1048.

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Submissions Policy for Stories and Articles for Parents and Children Together

Stories for Children and Parents:

1. Make the story fun for children—your primary audience. The adult reading along will enjoy the story if the child does.
2. Make sure that your story is acceptable to parents. We do not want parents to reject the story because it is inappropriate for their children. Writing a story of interest to children and at the same time pleasing to parents is a big challenge.
3. Your story should be no longer than eight double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.
4. Correct grammar and syntax are important. For the most part we choose to model correct standard English.
5. Be careful about the vocabulary you use in your story. Rule out really long and difficult-to-pronounce words. Use "plain" English, when you can—words that have English roots rather than French or Latin ones.
6. Make your stories gender inclusive. Do not use sexist terminology or ideas. Our stories must be interesting to both boys and girls.
7. You may illustrate your own story, but they must be line drawings in pen and ink only. The drawings must be able to be scanned, so too much detail will not work.

Articles for Parents:

1. Articles should contain practical information and helpful strategies. Anecdotes and other experiences modeling useful learning methods are particularly desirable.
2. Your article should be no longer than four double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.

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"Rebel Cows: A Victim's Story"
Narrator: Nathan Michaels
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Stranger: Rich Fish
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Future Issues of *Parents and Children Together*

- *Working with the School*
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- *Test Taking*
- *Poetry*
- *Library*
- *Earth Day/Environment*
- *Different Cultures*
- *Improving Your Child's Memory*
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- *Expressing Yourself through Writing*
- *Speaking and Listening Skills*

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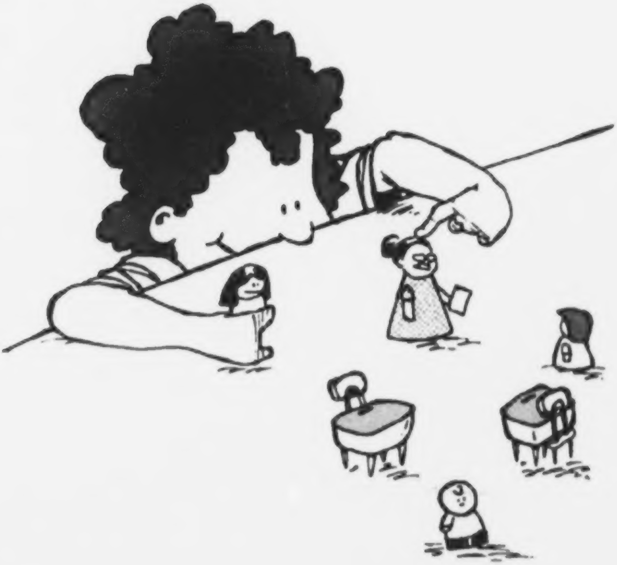
This booklet has a companion audio tape on "Working with the School." Occasionally there are directions on the tape that do not appear in the booklet or headings in the booklet that aren't spoken on the tape.



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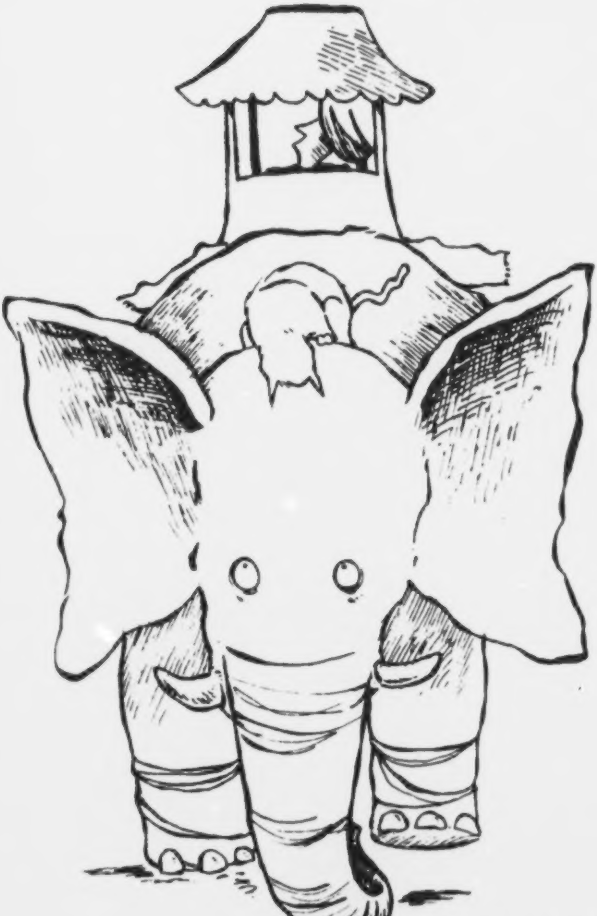
Parents and Children Together

Working with the School



Read-along Stories:

The Key into Winter

Loaf of Bread

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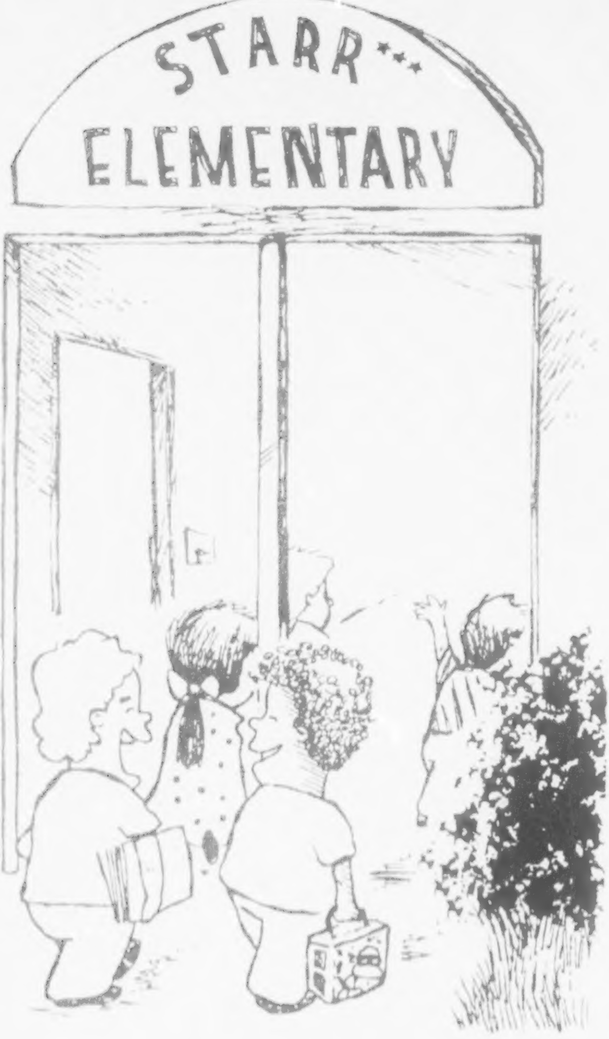
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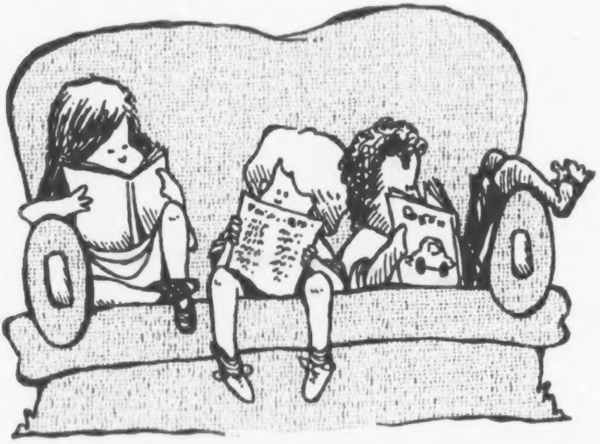
ELEMENTARY

Getting Started

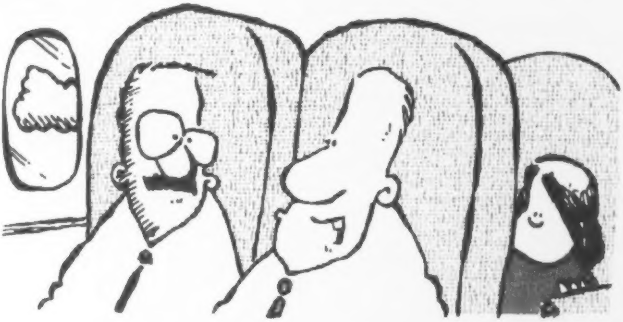
Welcome to this issue of *Parents and Children Together.* As parents, we want to do everything we can to help our children get a good education. In this issue we discuss how parents can help their children by working with the school.

On side B of the tape (and in the second half of the booklet) we have two read-along stories. We encourage you to listen to these stories and to read them with your children, so that they can participate in the excitement of story reading. Of course, your child can also listen to the stories alone, if you wish.



Working with the School

We hear lots of talk these days about parent involvement in schools and in their children's education. In fact, the phrase "parent involvement" is used so often that it's worth asking just what it means.



Recently, while flying to a meeting, I told the person sitting next to me that I wrote articles for a parent magazine. He immediately started talking about his children and his concern about their education. He said that some of his friends were teaching their children at home and were not sending them to school. He and his wife were not going to set up their own home school. But they were interested in how they could work with their local school to give their children the tools they needed to succeed in life.

What a wonderful, positive attitude this man had about parent involvement! He wanted to work with the school to help his children gain the information, skills, and creative expression they needed to succeed as learners and responsible citizens. I think that's an excellent definition of parent involvement. It suggests that parents should focus on their children's learning and share decisions and responsibilities with teachers and other school personnel.

By concentrating on what your children are learning, you have something to discuss at parent-teacher conferences. Besides the general question of whether or not they are doing okay, you can ask specifically what they are able to do as readers, writers, scientists, and mathematicians. Since you share with the school the responsibility of helping your children make progress and develop a positive attitude toward learning, you and the teacher need to talk about specific plans that will help your children achieve these goals.

Your efforts to carry out a plan for your children usually center around homework and a place for home study. The need for regular study time, a place to study away from TV and other distractions, and help from parents must be etched in our brains. We can't lose sight of the value of homework in individual learning. Showing interest in your children's school work and in helping them at home contributes significantly to their success in school. Researcher Joyce Melton has found that parents' daily interest in school and school learning contributes more to children's success than does simply participating in conferences or volunteering to work at school.

Of course, volunteering to work at school or in your child's classroom is a beneficial way for you to get involved. Whether you work on a PTO project or tutor children at school, once you are there, you have easy access to the teachers, principals, and counselors who can also help you with your own child's education.

Parent involvement may also include becoming an advocate for your child and for other children in the school. This may mean that you take an individual complaint to the principal to set up legal channels for protecting the interests of a group of children. Thus your attention to these problems helps schools focus attention on these children. For example, there may be a group of families who don't speak English well and for whom the school needs a policy change to help them succeed in school.

Another aspect of this picture is your own education. Because we are always discovering new things about how children learn, we are regularly adjusting the school curriculum to meet new needs, such as drug and AIDS education. By going to information meetings, seminars, and health demonstrations, you may become better informed about the techniques that schools now use. This kind of information can guide you in assisting your own children.

Your interest has benefits. From various studies of parent involvement in education we know that parental concern improves children's school achievement and self-esteem. Just having Mom or Dad show an interest in their world gives children a boost, a sense of importance.

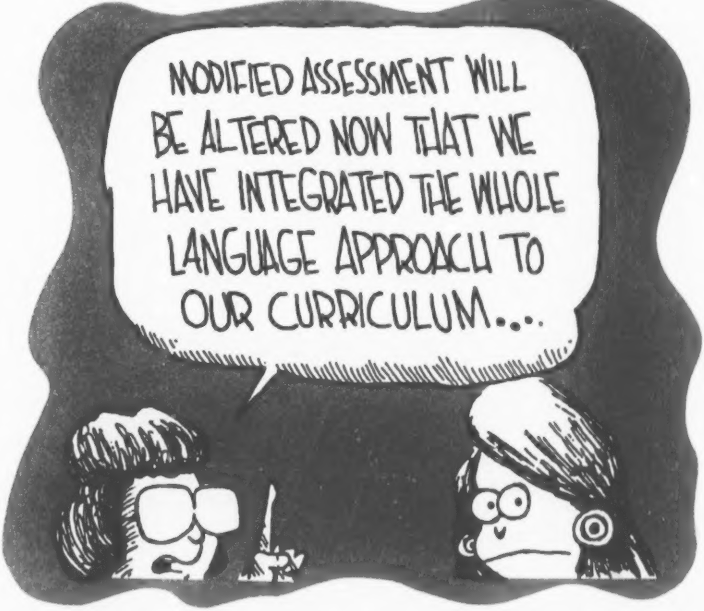
WHAT DID YOU DO TODAY, HONEY?
For Mom

Parents also help themselves. Working together with school personnel improves parents' self-worth—perhaps because they acquire useful skills that can be used with their children and because they begin to realize how valuable they are to their children.

At any rate, when it comes to parent involvement, "just do it," as one ad campaign tells us. Your kids will benefit, you will benefit, and the school will be a better place for children because one more adult has contributed to its mission. A couple of years ago, I had the pleasure of visiting twenty-three highly successful schools. One common factor in each was a high degree of parent involvement.

What should you do? Here are some things you can do to make sure your relationship with your child's school will help her:

1. Focus your discussions on your child, not on the teacher or school. How can we work together to benefit the child?
2. Include the principal and school counselor when your child needs their attention, too.
3. Insist that teachers and other school personnel talk everyday language. If someone uses educational jargon, ask for an explanation that you can understand.


MODIFIED ASSESSMENT WILL BE ALTERED NOW THAT WE HAVE INTEGRATED THE WHOLE LANGUAGE APPROACH TO OUR CURRICULUM....

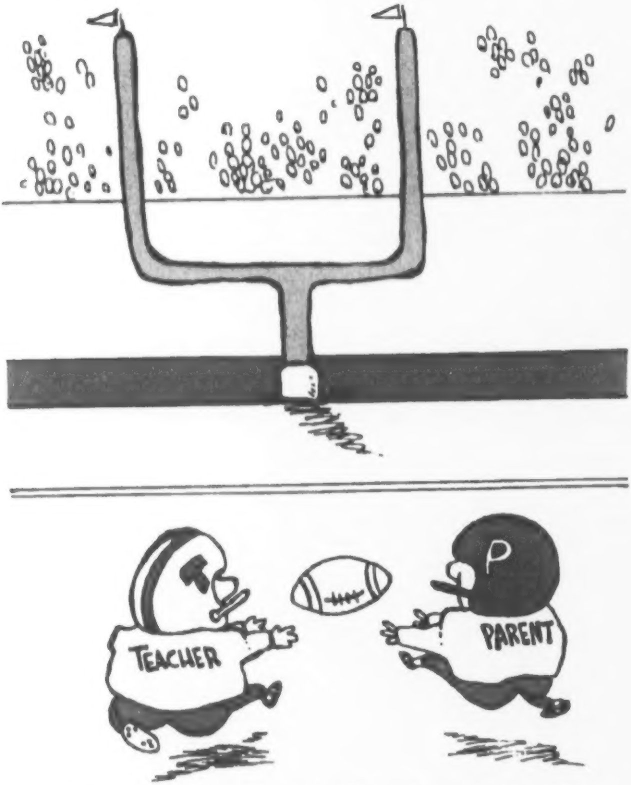
4. Share your first-hand experiences about your child and her needs.

5. By all means, disagree with a teacher's comments if your experience counters what he or she says. Create a dialogue about your child.

6. Let your child know that you will work at home to support efforts started in the classroom. You and the teacher will work together to help your child achieve success. Don't engage in "teacher bashing."

7. Build a collaborative attitude between yourself and the school. When you think of school personnel who can help you with your child, remember that there are many people who will work with you—principal, counselor, nurse, social worker, coach, music teacher, and so on. Get to know them, and ask for their assistance when it's needed.

8. If your child has a problem at school, sometimes a conflict between you and school professionals may arise. Take the attitude that you can negotiate your differences because you both have the goal of improving your child's education.



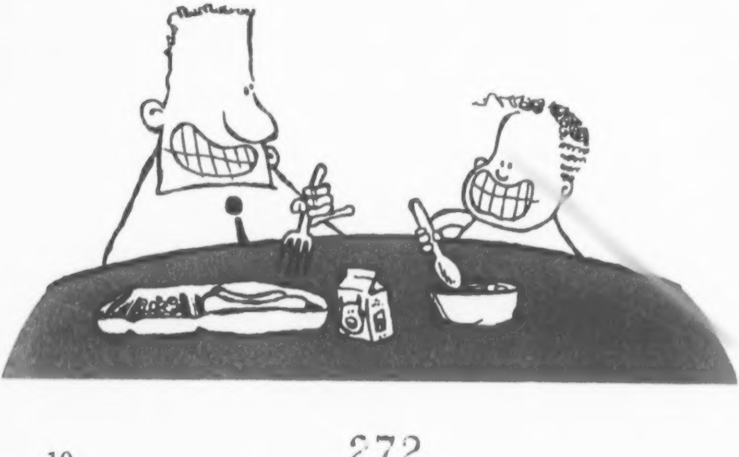
These suggestions will make relationships between you and the school, you and your child, and your child and the school, beneficial to all involved.

Parents' Questions about School

Parents often ask questions about interactions with the school. Here are some examples:

I'm a single-parent father. Do you have any suggestions for me and other parents like myself who would like to volunteer to do things at school, but find it difficult because of work schedules?

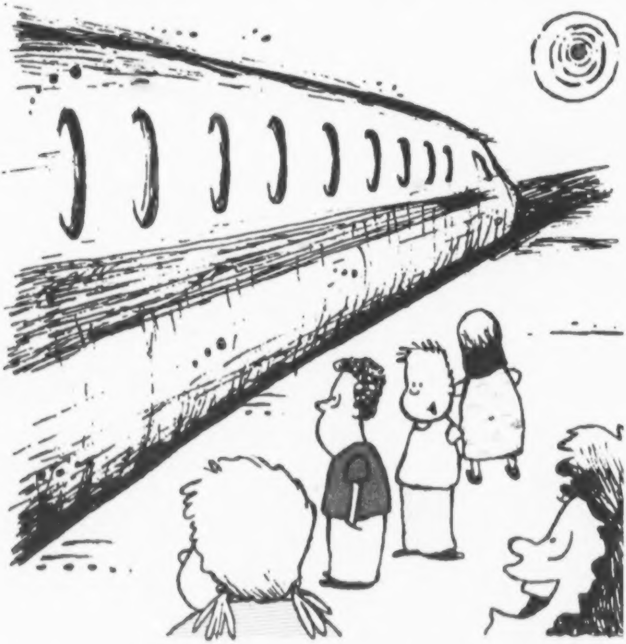
Even though you are very busy, there are still ways you can participate in school. One father I know uses his personal holiday one day a year to help in his son's class. He eats lunch with his son and spends the afternoon watching and helping in the class.



Young children feel honored when a parent visits their classroom to help. Some companies establish close relationships with schools in their community and encourage home-school communication by allowing parents time off to attend parent-teacher conferences.

Some schools invite parents for lunch. They set aside certain days of the month when parents can join their children at school for lunch. Notices are sent home reminding parents of the dates. Parents must notify the school ahead of time so that the cafeteria can prepare extra lunches. Check your school's lunch policy. If it doesn't offer such an invitation, it might be that the idea never occurred to school officials. Perhaps you could get a parents' lunch day started.

Parents can volunteer to talk to a class about their jobs, special interests, or hobbies. A parent of one of my students worked for a railroad. We were studying a unit on transportation, so on his visit to school he talked about trains, their design, how they have changed over the years, and how they benefit our state. He discussed train safety and involved the children in a lively discussion. Later, he arranged a field trip for us to visit the train depot where he worked. There are details about every job that would prove interesting to curious young minds. Check with your child's teacher to see if you can share your interests and expertise with his class.

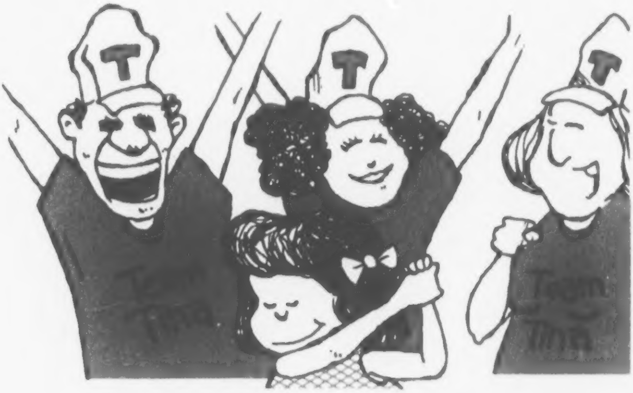


BEST COPY AVAILABLF

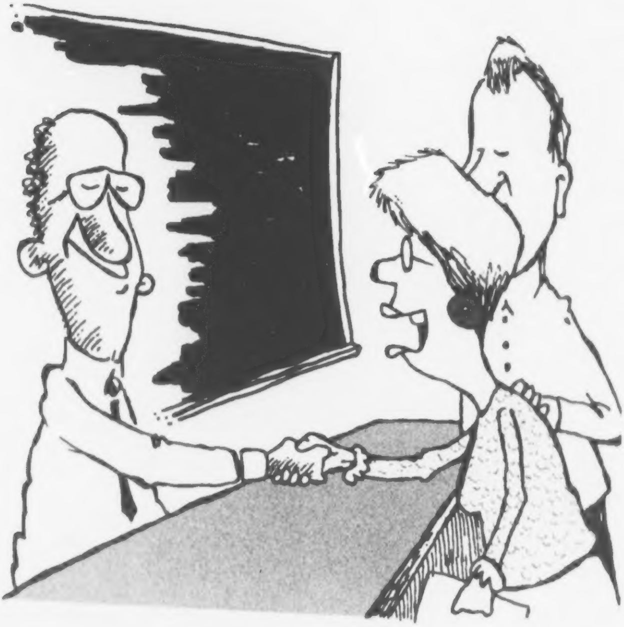
There are many activities going on outside the classroom that support the school. For example, banquets, plays, carnivals, book fairs, sports, and other events are organized by teacher and parent groups. The principal's office can help you find an activity that best suits your schedule and interests. Remember that parent involvement doesn't always mean being visible in the school. Helping your child at home with school work, taking time to read aloud, and doing other school-related activities are important contributions to your child's education. Many teachers ask parents to spend time each evening working on math or reading with their child. This may be the best way to show your support.

I don't like to attend parent-teacher conferences. I usually sign up for a conference time and then don't show up. Are parent-teacher conferences really that important?

Psychologist James Comer says that to get the best education, children need to have a team behind them. At a minimum, this team is made up of parents and teachers working together. Children who are well behaved and working on grade level need this team support just as much as those with learning difficulties, those who are unmotivated, or those who lack self-discipline.



Perhaps you back out of school conferences because you lack the self-confidence to face a teacher about your child. It may seem silly to you, but it is a good idea to dress up for a conference like you would if you were going to work in an office. Dressing like a professional may add to your self-confidence.



It is also a good idea for both parents to attend the conference. If you are divorced or separated, of course this may not be possible. When both parents go to the conference they act as a team and support one another on important issues.

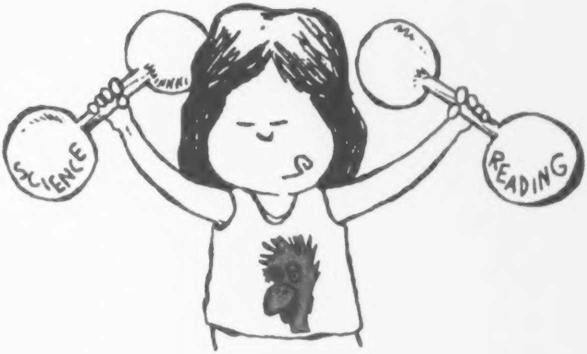
Go into the conference with a written list of questions and concerns. The teacher will appreciate your interest and preparation. Don't be afraid to ask a lot of questions. This is your child's education you're talking about. Press the teacher for ways in which you can all work together to benefit your child.

I always go to my children's parent-teacher conferences, but feel very uneasy and "draw a blank" when their teachers ask if I have any questions. Do you have any advice for an interested, but nervous, parent?

School conferences are great ways for parents and teachers to learn more about children. You can make your conference more successful if you do some "homework" first. Many of us are better at asking questions when we think in advance of what we want to ask.

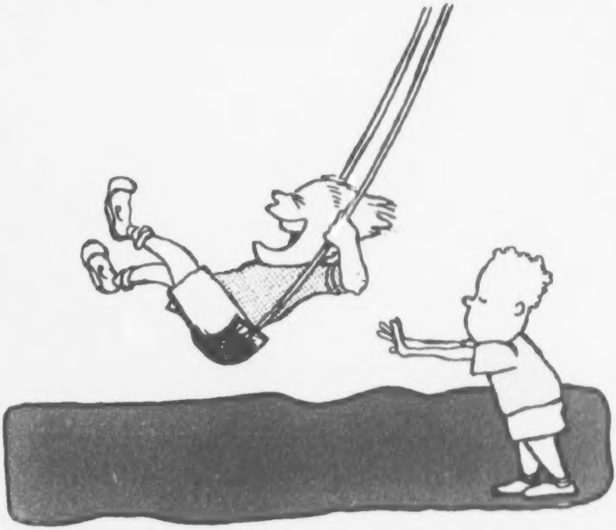
Here are some questions you may want answered:

- What are my child's strengths and weaknesses?



- What are my child's work habits like?
- Does my child need extra help in any subject?
- Are there things we can do at home to help her?

- Is my child making normal progress in reading? In math?
- Does my child complete homework regularly?



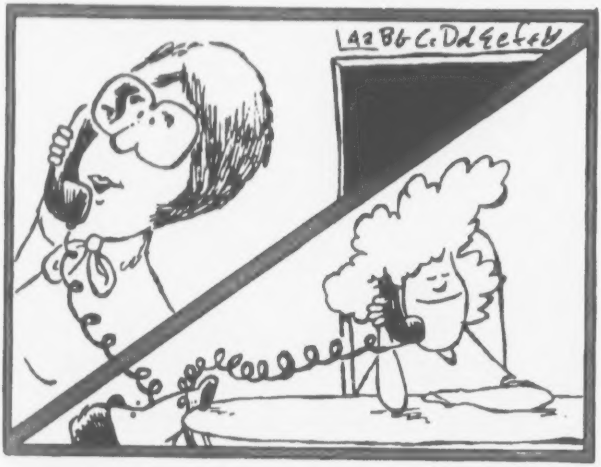
- How does my child relate to other children? To other adults?

Besides asking about your child's school work, you need to share information that can help the teacher know and understand your child. Be sure to tell the teacher about health needs, your child's interests, or any changes in your home or family that affect your child's learning. **The most important thing to remember about a conference is to attend it.** Just by being there you show the teacher and your child that you are interested in their work. That goes a long way toward building a cooperative spirit among you.

How can I develop good communication with my children's teachers?

The most important point to remember in developing an open line of communication with your children's teachers is ***don't wait for the first conference.*** Find time within the first couple of weeks of school to meet your children's teachers. If you have any special concerns, make sure teachers are aware of them. Perhaps your child has vision or hearing problems that require special seating. Make sure your child's teacher is aware of his special needs.

Let teachers know where you can be reached during the day, and that you would appreciate being contacted should problems arise. From that point on, whenever you sense that your child is having a problem in school, call her teacher immediately. When parent-teacher conference time arrives, there should be no surprises.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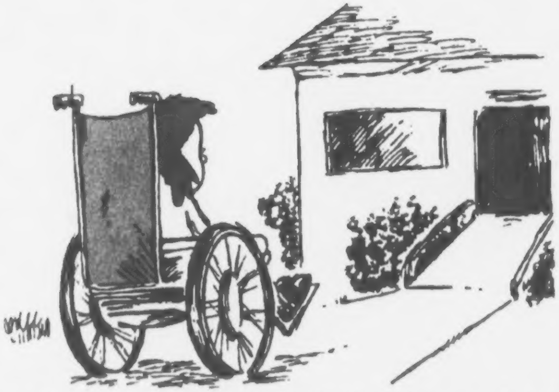


My son has attended a school for handicapped children. This year he will be going to a public school and will be mainstreamed into the regular classroom. We want this to be a positive experience. What can we do to support the school's efforts in this situation?

Become an educated parent. Find out all you can about the nature of your child's disability and how it affects school performance. Ask teachers and other professionals for reading material, and go to the public library for information. This will help you avoid making unrealistic demands for academic achievement on both your child and his teacher.

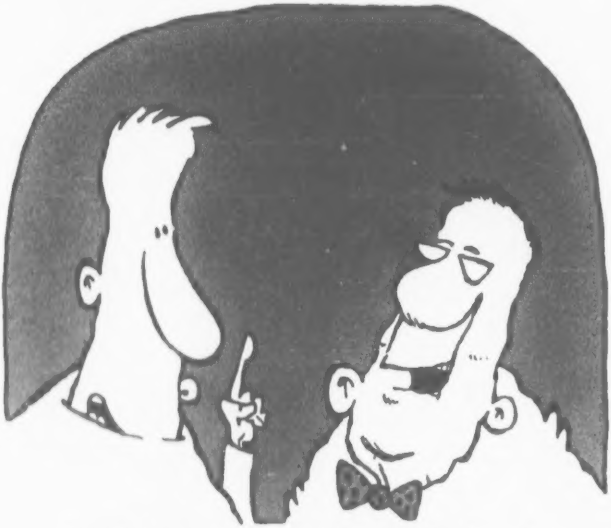
Have realistic expectations about what the school can and cannot do. Join a parent support group or parent-teacher organization that will help you determine if the school is effective in helping your child. There may also be a national organization linking families concerned about a particular handicap. Such organizations are excellent sources of information and support.

Work closely with your child's teacher. Being in a regular classroom is a new experience for your child. Keep in close touch with the teacher, and see how you can help. Make sure you understand the terminology your child's teacher uses to describe your child's unique needs. Oftentimes such terms are clear to teachers, who use them frequently, but not clear to parents. Don't be afraid to ask questions, to request a further explanation, or even to seek another opinion.

Don't assume the school can do everything without your assistance. Find out what the school is doing and what strategies are being used. Perhaps there are things you can do at home that will reinforce school activities. Keeping in close contact strengthens the parent-teacher team. If you are having a problem with your child at home, alert the school. Teachers or school officials may have suggestions to make, and can tell you if the problem is interfering with school performance. If possible, keep a positive attitude. It will help your child.

P.A.T.
P.A.T.
PARENTS & TEACHERS

If a teacher contacts you about problems he is having with your child, try not to be defensive. First, listen to his side of the story. No matter how difficult this might seem, think of it as an opportunity to share information and ideas. When you show that you are concerned with what a teacher or administrator is saying, he will be more willing to listen when you have the floor. When a problem arises, suggest a meeting so you can address the problem together. Face-to-face discussions are much more effective than trying to solve problems over the telephone.



Speaking positively about school or the teacher fosters a respectful attitude in your child, and can contribute to healthy school performance. A feeling of mutual respect and commitment between parent and teacher helps your child.

Contact the school frequently. Don't wait until a problem becomes serious before contacting the school. If your child seems unhappy or frustrated, contact the school immediately. Alert the teacher to problems you feel are significant. Many times minor problems can be solved before they reach crisis proportions if home and school have open lines of communication.

Take advantage of the invitations your school extends. Attend back-to-school night, parent-teacher conferences, and other school-related activities. Get together with other parents at PTO meetings or other parent support groups. Knowing what goes on at school can extend and enrich your child's school performance.

WELCOME BACK

Try not to get angry if you find that the school does not include you in making decisions about your child to the degree that you want. Anger often turns off those people who are in a position to help. Instead, restate clearly that the best approach to educating your child is if each party knows what the other is doing. This way neither parent nor teacher works against the other's efforts.

If you have questions about working with the school, please write to us, and we will try to answer them for you. You may find your question in another issue of Parents and Children Together.

Write to:
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2805 E. 10th Street, Suite 150
Bloomington, IN 47408-2698

* * *

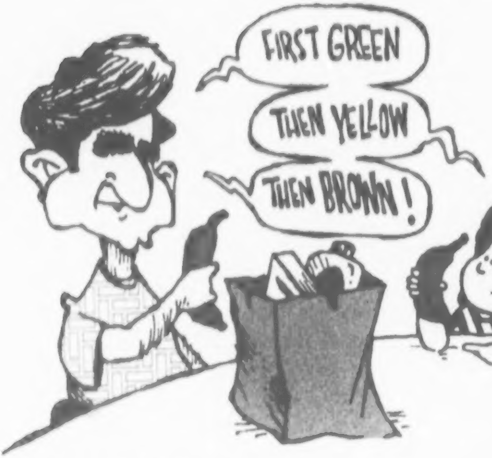
The Parent as Model: Early Learning

Amy Kindred-Pierce, a former elementary teacher, suggests some activities that parents can use to help their children in early learning.

Parents can make a real difference in helping their children form a lifelong love of learning through the process of modeling. When asked to recall their first memories of learning to read, most adults describe sitting on a relative's lap to share the funnies, or listening intently as mom or dad read to them at bedtime. As toddlers, we all learned to speak by mimicking the language around us. Our first attempts at writing involved scribbling on paper, making marks that were attempts to write like mom or dad. In all of these instances of early learning, the common thread is the knowledge acquired through observation of others in natural settings. This is where our self-confidence was nurtured.

All children enjoy having someone read to them. Choose high-quality picture books, predictable stories, poetry, and both non-fiction and fictional titles. When you read, read with feeling. Show enthusiasm for the exciting parts and compassion for characters who are troubled. Share your feelings with your child about parts of the story that strike his fancy. Be an active listener who shows an interest in what your child says by nodding and responding naturally to his comments. Your child is capable of having in-depth discussions if you allow him to express himself freely and openly.

As they enter school, children are required to become capable in various areas. They are often tested in the areas of color recognition, coloring within the lines, cutting and pasting, recalling the alphabet, and counting to 100. Parents can help their kids at home by reviewing and practicing with them in an open, accepting environment. The following activities are suggested to help your child develop her abilities in these areas:



Color recognition

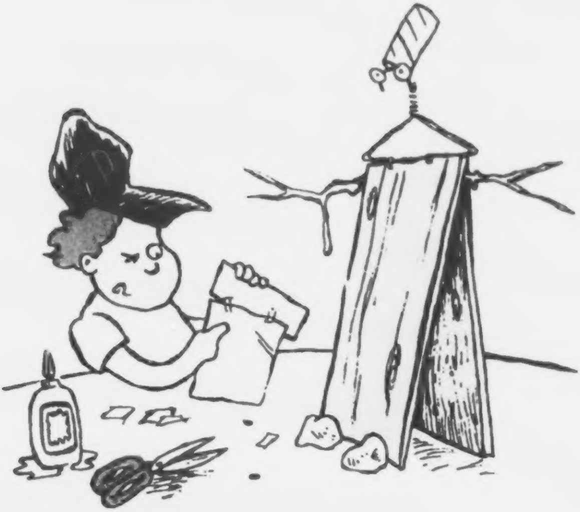
- When unloading groceries, talk about the colors of fruits and vegetables. Look for colors in printed materials. Go for a walk and discuss colors in the environment. Allow your child opportunities to work with crayons, colored pencils, brushes, and markers. Model coloring and painting by using these materials yourself. Print the color words and have your child imitate you.

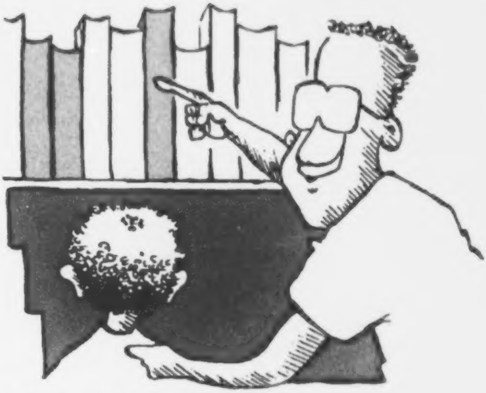
Coloring within the lines

- Take a few minutes to sit down with your youngster. Pick up a crayon and color the funnies or scribble on a piece of paper and fill in the shapes you make. Share with your child a page from her coloring book. By participating, you are modeling, but most of all you are making time to talk and share in a natural setting. Don't be too critical.

Cutting and pasting

- Have your child help you cut out coupons or clip recipes. Have on hand a container filled with a bottle of glue, scissors, paper, and crayons. If you prefer to keep messes outside, that's fine. In fact, go for nature hunts and return home to construct and create art projects using items found in your backyard. The best investment I ever made was in a vinyl cloth-backed tablecloth. Relax with your child and make something too. The best learning experiences come from sharing, not from critical evaluation of the finished piece.





Recollection of the alphabet

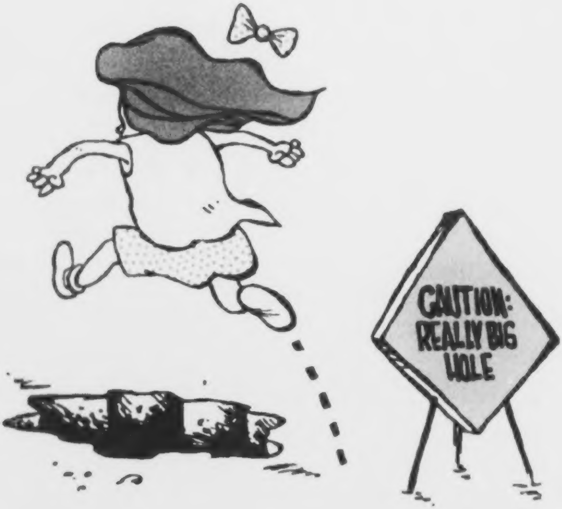
- While riding in the car or bus with your youngster, search for letters on signs and billboards. Labels on food items such as cereal or soup is another area to explore when teaching your child the letters of the alphabet. When looking for a book at the library, read aloud the letters as you search for an author or title.

Counting to 100

- Children love to sing, so make up songs or use traditional ones to model counting. After reading a story, go back with your child and count certain letters, such as the number of Os or Ms or the number of animals in a picture. Share the change in your pocket or purse with your child.

  Allow him to count out the money with you when you make a purchase. Children and adults learn better when activities have a purpose.

As parents, we should be aware that our own learning never ceases. We ourselves have learned largely through our mistakes and successes while modeling others. Children need to have the same opportunity to take risks, to make guesses, to be accepted for their strengths and weaknesses, and to feel good about themselves.



Continue to make time to communicate with your child. When learning at school is coupled with modeling, encouragement, and reinforcement at home, your child will more easily attain her maximum learning potential.

Books for Parents and Children

On pages 32-40, we have put together lists of books for parents and children. We encourage you to take time to read a few of these books with your child, and talk about some of the characters in the stories.

At the beginning of this issue, we mentioned that Side B of the audio tape contains two stories designed to be read-along stories. You may want to take some time to look ahead at these stories before you read along with your child. It is also important to talk about the story ahead of time.

Before reading the story, talk about the title or things that might happen in the story. Then, after the story is finished, talk about it again. By the way, if in the middle of the story something funny or interesting happens, it's O.K. to stop the tape and discuss the event, or ask your child questions such as "What things are fun to do in winter?" or "What is your favorite animal?" and then follow it up with a why or why not. These questions make your conversation about the story more natural and more valuable.

When you and your child are ready, turn the tape to Side B and listen to the stories as you read along together, or you may read the stories aloud while your child reads along in the booklet.

Books for Parents

Empowering Your Child, by D. Fred Bateman (Hampton Roads). Shows parents how to create a home environment that will stimulate their children's academic development and help them succeed in school. Deals with topics such as reading, trust, self-esteem, responsibility, discipline, family relationships, and study habits.

Staying Back, by Janice Hale Hobby (Triad). Presents the stories of seven children who repeated a grade, and later became successful students. Also gives guidance for parents trying to support their children through this experience.

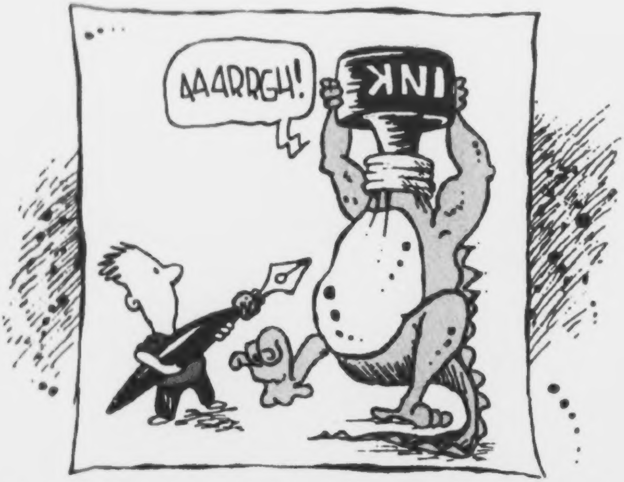
I Hate School! Some Commonsense Answers for Parents Who Wonder Why, by Jim Grant. Discusses school readiness, failure and retention, and developmental placement. Gives examples of signals children send when they need help.

Helping Your Child Achieve in School, by Dr. Barbara Johnson. Deals with motivation, reading, testing, and beginning school. Also covers parents and teachers as partners, gifted children, and computers.

Books to Read Together

Ages 4-6

Simon's Book, by Henrick Drescher (Mulberry Books). Simon is trapped on a piece of paper—with a monster. He must figure out a way to save himself by using pens and an ink bottle.



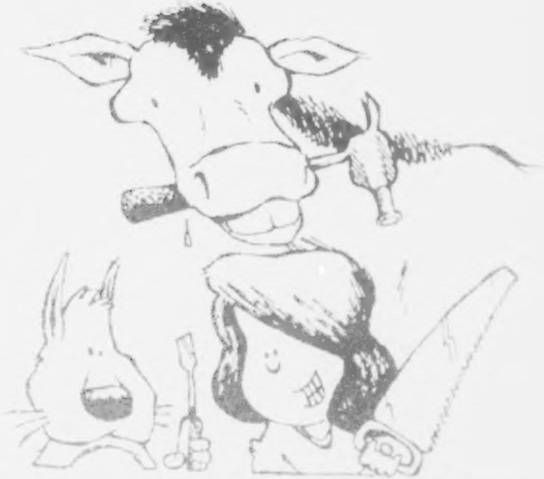
Pigs, by Robert Munsch (Annick Press Ltd.). Megan is told to feed the pigs, but *not* to open the gate. She opens the gate, and the rowdy pigs overrun her home and school. Megan must figure out a way to trick the pigs and get them back in their pen.

The Present, by Michael Emberley (Little, Brown). Arne can't decide which birthday present would be best for his nephew—a pocketknife that he really wants to keep for himself or a bicycle. When Arne arrives, his nephew unknowingly helps him make the best choice.

Ages 6-8

Benjamin & The Pillow Saga, by Stephane Poulin (Annick Press). Benjamin has the magical gift of humming sweet soft music into pillows that give people who sleep on them a deep, delicious sleep. When he leaves his job at the pillow factory to hum at an opera house, the company's pillows lose their magic. Then Benjamin thinks of a clever way to fill people's pillows with music again.

♫ ♪ ♫ HMMM-HMM-HMM-HMMM-HUMMMM-M-MM-HMM... ♪ ♫

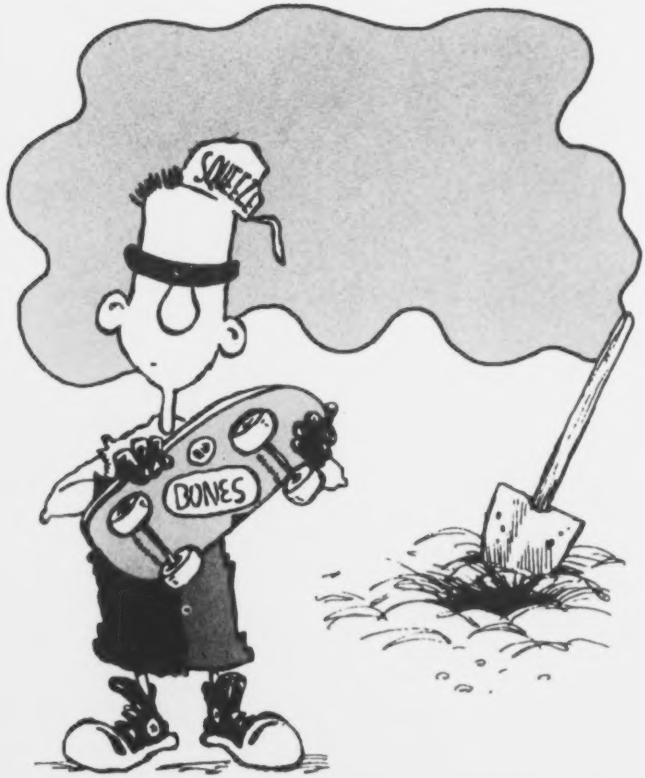


Annie & Co., by David McPhail (Henry Holt). Annie sets out with her cat and horse to fix whatever she finds that is broken. With a little luck, some good friends, and lots of imagination she finds she can fix almost anything.

Roxaboxen, by Alice McLerran (Lothrop). Roxaboxen was a special place; it was always there, waiting. Visit this magical world of fantasy created through the imagination of children by joining the author as she reflects upon her childhood memories.

Ages 8-10

The Cricket in Times Square, by George Selden (Dell Publishing). When Chester the cricket arrives in New York from Connecticut, he quickly makes friends with Harry the cat and Tucker the mouse. They have lots of fun and lively adventures, and help a young boy bring money to his family's newsstand.



Skateboard Tough, by Matt Christopher (Little, Brown). Brett discovers a buried skateboard, "The Lizard," and suddenly his skateboarding skills improve. His friends wonder if the board is haunted, and Brett wants to find out who buried it and why.

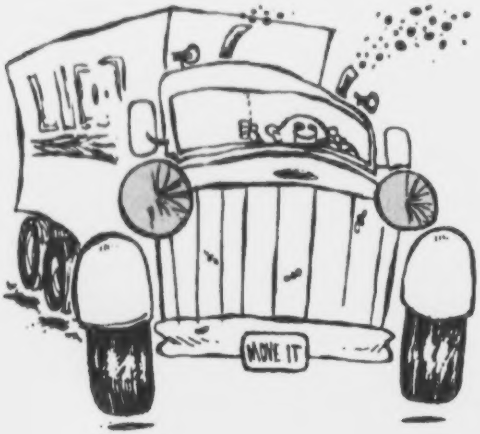
Making Movies, by Perry Schwartz (Lerner). Look behind the scenes and find out how a movie is made. Presents the stages of film production, from the idea all the way through to the advertising.

Books for Your Children to Read by Themselves

Ages 4-6

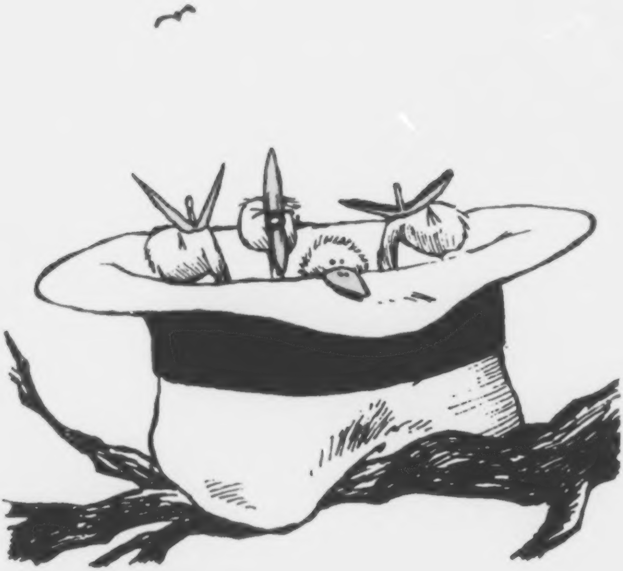
More First Words Every Day, by Margaret Miller (HarperCollins). Shows words children use in their daily routines. Each word appears along with a photograph of a child portraying the action represented.

Truck, by Donald Crews (Mulberry Books). Follow a big, red truck from the loading dock to its destination. Shows through pictures different kinds of trucks and the places they go.



Yellow Ball, by Molly Bang (Morrow). A yellow ball is lost in the sea during a game. Watch the ball drift over the waves and sail ashore to find a new home.

Ages 6-8



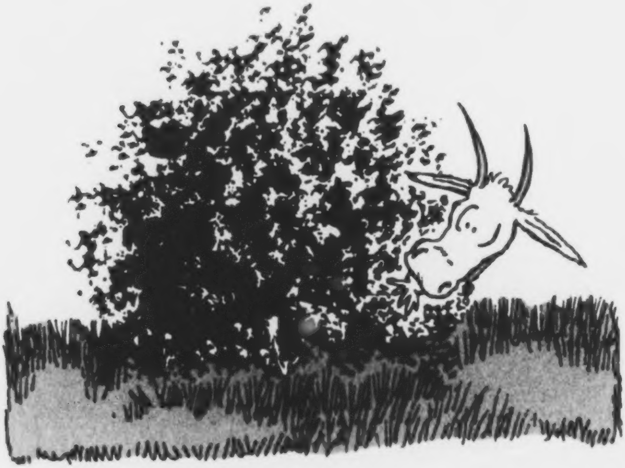
Mister Momboo's Hat, by Ralph Leemis (Cobblehill Books). A hat belongs on your head. Mister Momboo puts his hat on, but then the wind takes it on an adventure of its own. Finally the hat comes back and ends up as a nest for a family of robins.

The Journey Home, by Alison Lester (Houghton Mifflin). Wild and Woolly dig a hole in their sand pit, fall through it, and land at the North Pole. As they journey back home they go to many enchanted places and meet lots of unique people.

Tar Beach, by Faith Ringgold (Crown). Cassie has a dream: to be free to go wherever she wants. One night, up on "tar beach", the rooftop of her apartment building, her dream comes true and she flies all over the city.

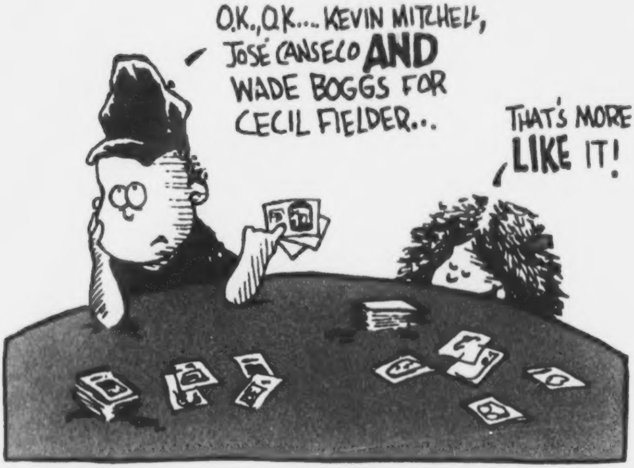
Ages 8-10

Rosebud and Red Flannel, by Ethel Pochocki (Henry Holt). Rosebud is a snobbish, lacy nightgown who thinks she is too good to converse with the likes of Red Flannel, a pair of woolen longjohns. They are blown off the clothesline in a winter storm and as they travel together, they find true love.



The Even Treasure Hunts, by Betsy Byars (HarperCollins). Jackson and Goat take turns hiding and hunting secret treasures. Goat's older sister, Rachel, does her best to foil their latest expedition.

The Great American Baseball Card Flipping, Trading, and Bubble Gum Book, by Brendan C. Boyd and Fred C. Harris (Ticknor and Fields). Presents over two hundred baseball cards with biographies for each. Includes commentary on trading, hoarding, and collecting baseball cards.


O.K., O.K.... KEVIN MITCHELL, JOSÉ CANSECO AND WADE BOGGS FOR CECIL FIELDER...
THAT'S MORE LIKE IT!

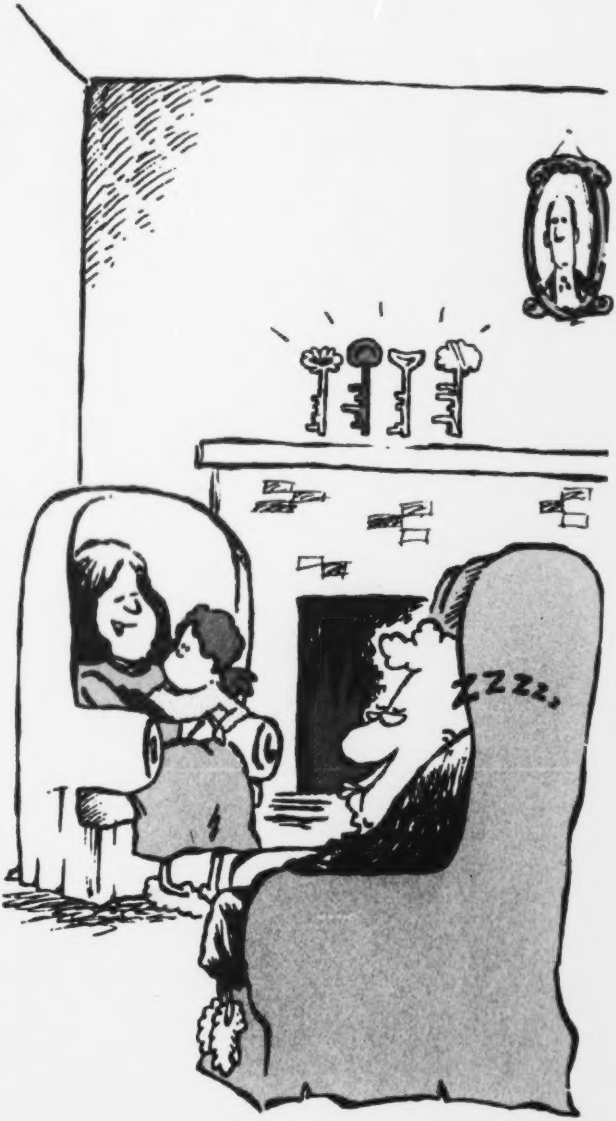
Magazines

Also ask the librarian for the following magazines for children:

Cricket
DuckTales Magazine
Highlights for Children
Jack and Jill
Letterbug
Reflections

* * *

Read-along Stories



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The Key into Winter

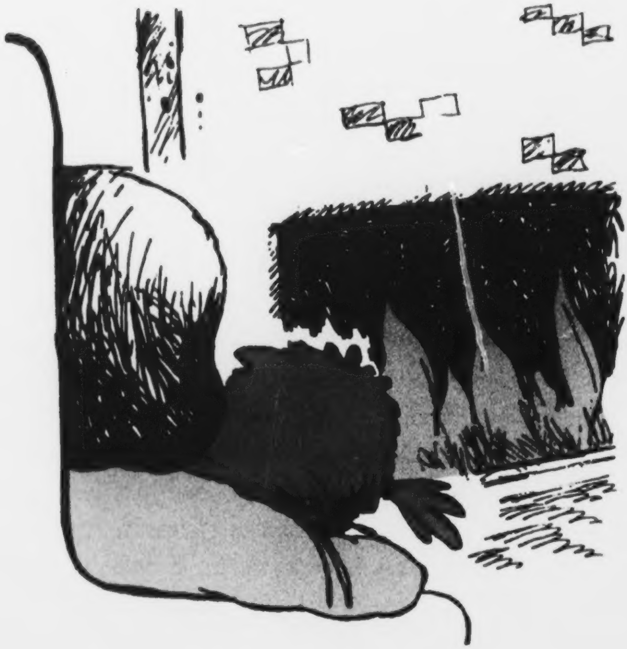
by Janet S. Anderson

Things to Do *before* Reading the Story

In many parts of the world, the change of seasons brings different kinds of weather to people's lives. This is especially true in much of the United States. How do seasons change where you live? Talk about the different things you have to do during each of the four seasons to stay comfortable. Which season do you like best? Why?

"Tell me, Mama," said Clara. "Tell me again about the time you hid the key into winter." She settled more snugly into her mother's lap. Her grandmother was dozing in a big chair beside her.

As she felt her mother's arms tighten around her, Clara looked up. Above the hearth hung four keys. The first was the key into spring, and it was made of silver, delicate and shining. The second was the key into summer, and it was gold, gleaming and heavy. The third was the key into autumn, and its copper shone with a fiery glow. The last was the key into winter. All the light of the room burned in its crystal depths.



"Tell me again how you almost lost it forever," said Clara.

"Again?" said her mother. But she smiled and, gazing into the fire's depths, began her old story. "It happened long ago, when I was very young."

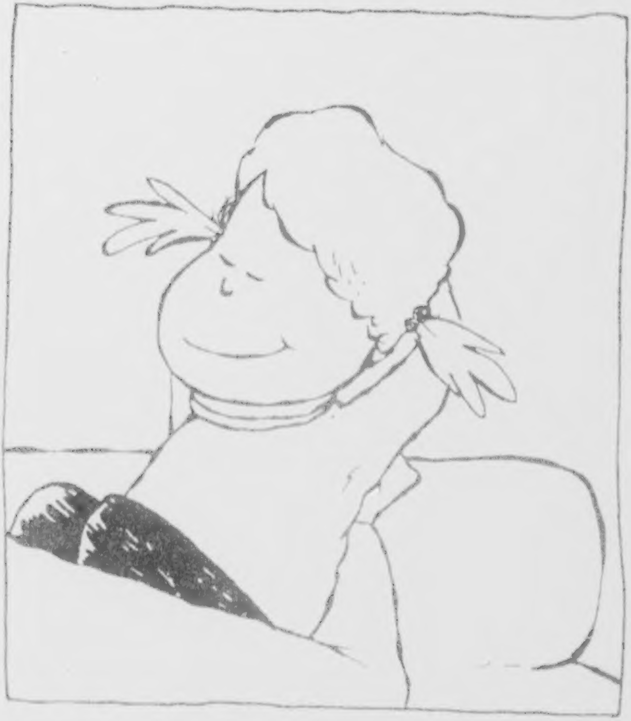
"Younger than me?" said Clara.

"Younger than you," said her mother. "But even then, the keys hung over the hearth as they do today. I loved to look at them. And every season when my mother took one down, she let me hold it for a moment in my hand."

"How did it feel?" said Clara.

"You tell me," said her mother.

Clara shut her eyes to think. "The key into spring feels cool at first and then warms in your hand. The key into summer is hot, but it doesn't hurt. The key into autumn. . ."



"My favorite," said her mother.

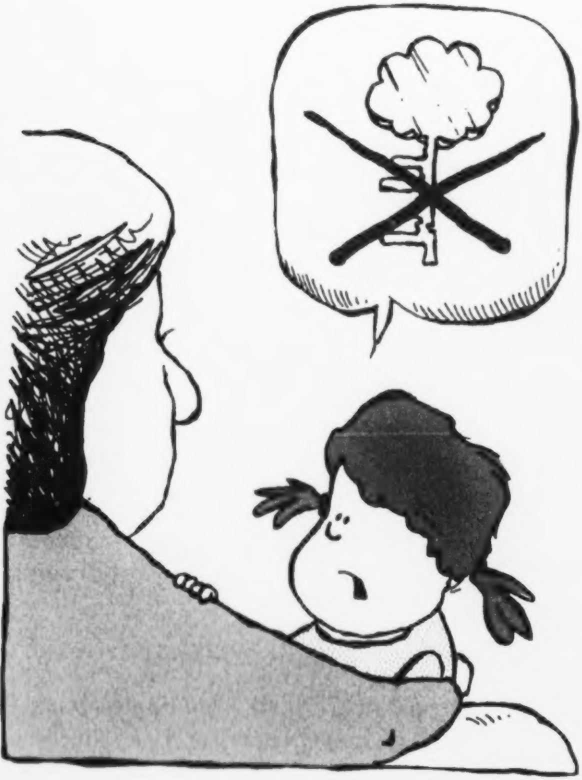
"Not mine," said Clara. "It's like a shock, like sparks that glow and then disappear into the dark."

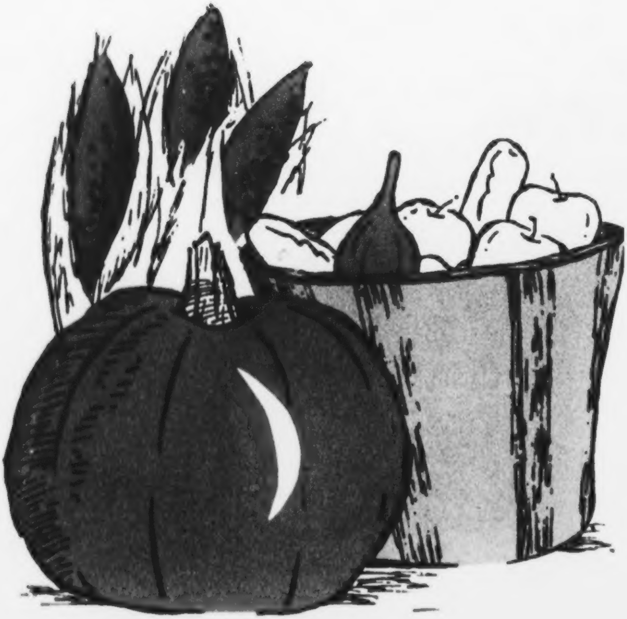
"And the key into winter?" said her mother. Clara shivered. "It burns with cold down to my bones. I don't like it, Mama."

"I didn't like it, either," said her mother. "And one year, I decided I would hide it so that it would never be winter again."

"Tell me, Mama," said Clara.

And her mother told her.

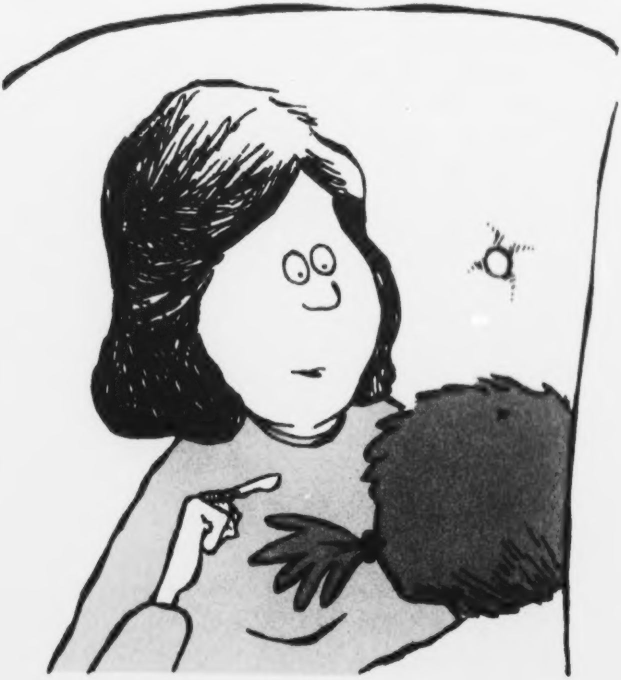




"It was a beautiful autumn. The trees glowed even by moonlight. The barn was filled with the rich harvest: golden corn, yellow squash, orange pumpkins, red apples. . .everything was bursting with color. It should have been a season of joy.

"But instead, we were sad. My grandmother lay thin and quiet in her upstairs room. She still smiled, but she could no longer laugh or tell me the stories I loved to hear. The doctor would just shake his head and say, 'There's not much I can do. Her body is old and tired. I'm afraid that this autumn will be her last.'

"Her last! But I loved her! There must be a way to save her!

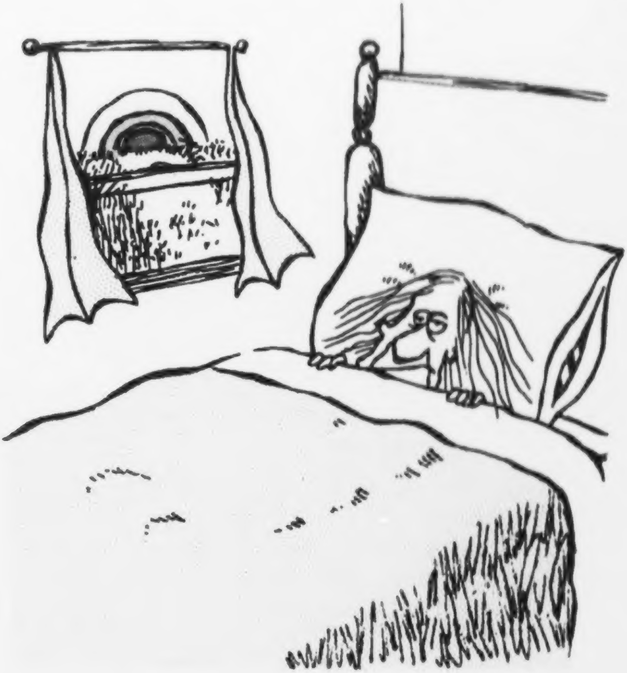


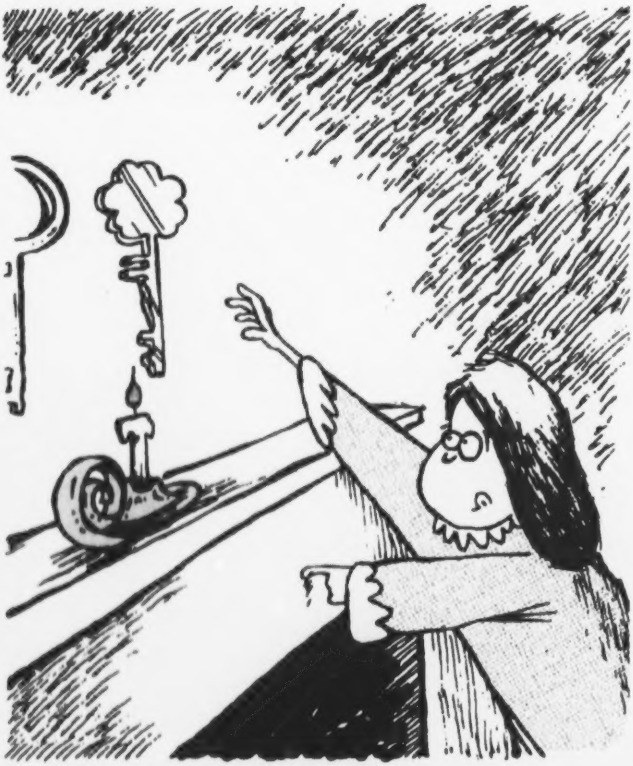
"Well, there was. It was easy. My mother could just stop the autumn from ending by keeping the winter from beginning. But when I asked her, she shook her head. 'Winter must come,' she said.

"'Please,' I begged her. 'Just don't use that ugly key into winter. Then autumn will stay, and Grandmother will stay. She'll laugh and tell me stories again.'

"But my mother just repeated her words. 'Winter must come,' she said, and that was all she would say.

"The days passed. Each night the dark came earlier. Each morning my grandmother seemed weaker. What could I do? One morning I stared up at the key waiting coldly over the hearth. Only one night remained before it would lock us out of one season and into another. There was no more time to lose.



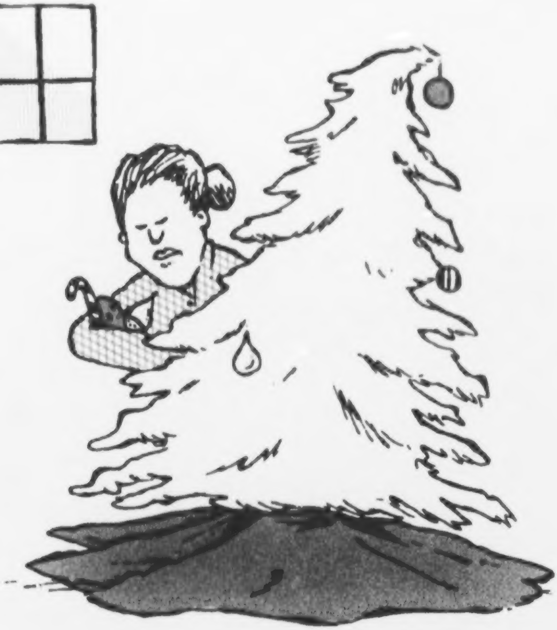


“That night when everyone slept, I crept downstairs. Quietly I pulled the stool over to the hearth. Careful of the Christmas candles, I stretched high on my toes to reach the key. It burned like cold fire in my hand. Wrapping it in a fold of my nightgown, I stumbled into the kitchen.

“A few minutes later, I was back in bed. I shivered for a long time, partly from cold, partly from fear. But I didn’t care. I had done it. I had saved my grandmother.

"The next morning when I came downstairs, my mother said nothing. But her face was paler than usual, and in her hands she held a Christmas ornament from our tree.

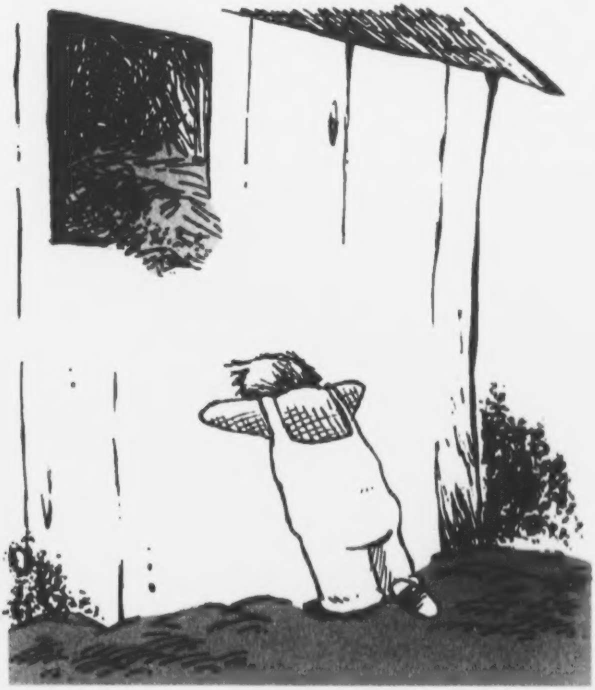
"The tree! Why, it was nearly bare, and the tall white candles from the mantel were lying in a heap on the floor.



"'Why are you taking down Christmas?' I asked.

"'The key into winter is gone,' she said. 'Without winter, there can be no Christmas.'

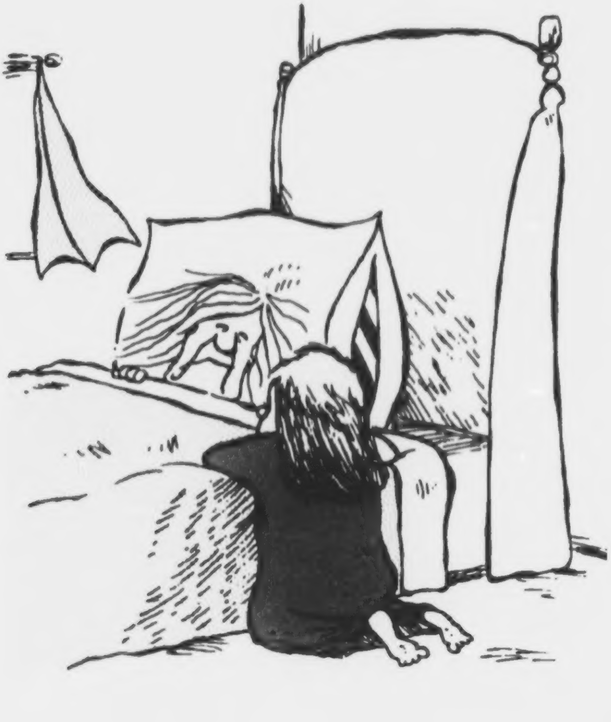
"I ran outside. The sleds and the ice skates pulled out weeks earlier by my impatient brothers were gone. My youngest brother was leaning against the barn. 'I want snow,' he was sobbing. 'I want Christmas. I want winter.'

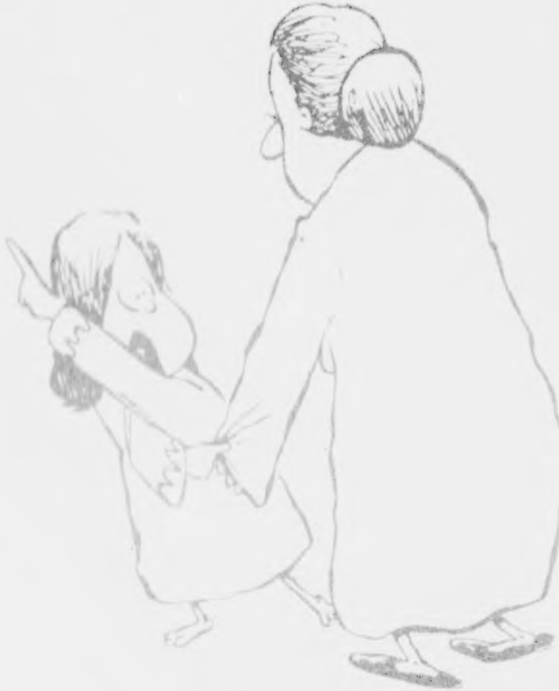


"Inside the barn stood my father and my grandfather. They were looking at the plow and the bags of seed corn and at the wooden buckets for collecting sap from our old maples. 'A terrible thing,' my grandfather was saying. 'No winter, no spring.'

"'No summer,' said my father. 'No harvest. A terrible thing.'" Frantic, I ran back inside. I ran up to my grandmother's room and knelt down beside her bed. 'It's not a terrible thing, is it?' I whispered to her. 'Who cares about Christmas? With no winter, you'll soon be well again, won't you? Won't you?'

"But my grandmother barely opened her eyes. Her whisper was very weak. 'No winter? No reason, then, to wait for spring.' And she closed her eyes again.





"'Mama!' I screamed, and she was immediately beside me.

"'She's asleep,' she said. 'It's all right.'

"'Mama,' I cried. 'Can't you bring spring now?' I tugged her down the stairs and pointed up at the silvery key. 'Please take it down. Turn it. That's what Grandmother is waiting for. She's waiting for the spring to make her well.'

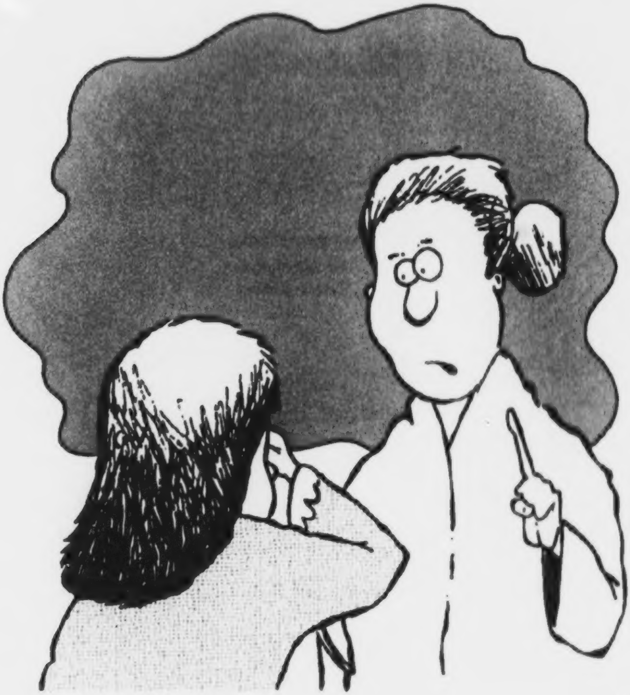
"'Listen to me,' said my mother. 'The key alone won't work. The key would unlock the door, yes, but only winter can open it. Only winter can open the door into spring.'

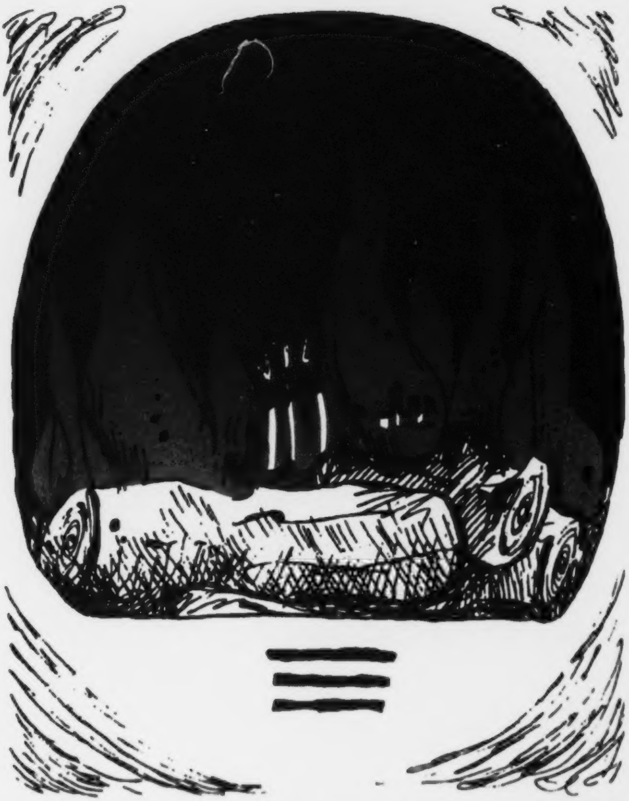
"'I hid the key, Mama,' I said quietly. 'I hid the key into winter.'

"'I know,' she said.

"'I hid it in the stove,' I sobbed. 'It's melted now, I'm sure it is.'

"'Show me,' said my mother.





"'Together we went into the kitchen. I opened the door of the stove. There, deep among the flames, was a glowing shape. With her long tongs, my mother reached in and pulled it out. 'It didn't melt,' I whispered, surprised.

"'Don't touch it,' said my mother. 'Its cold now would freeze your blood itself.' She looked at me gravely. 'And now what shall I do with it, with this key into winter?'

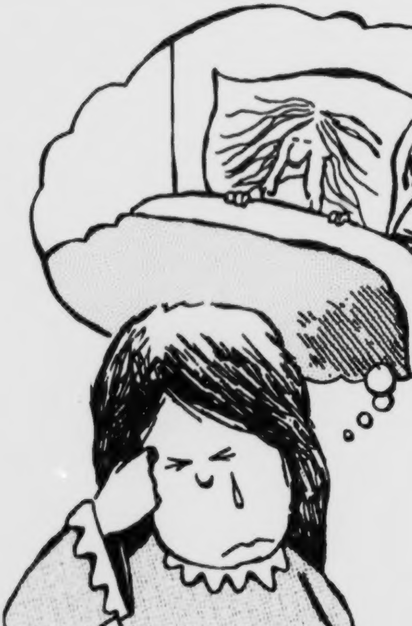
“I scrunched my eyes shut. ‘Is tonight the night?’ I finally asked.

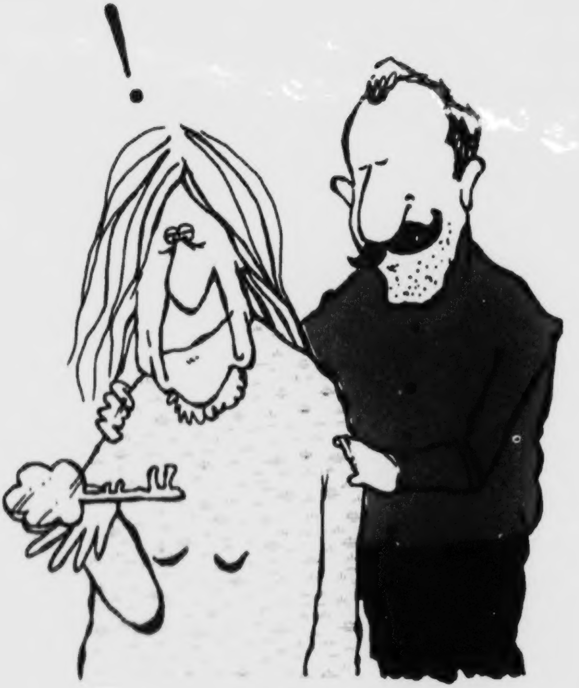
“‘Tonight is the night,’ she said.

“‘Winter must come?’

“‘You tell me.’

“I thought of my grandmother and wiped my tear-streaked face. ‘I guess only winter can open the door into spring,’ I said.





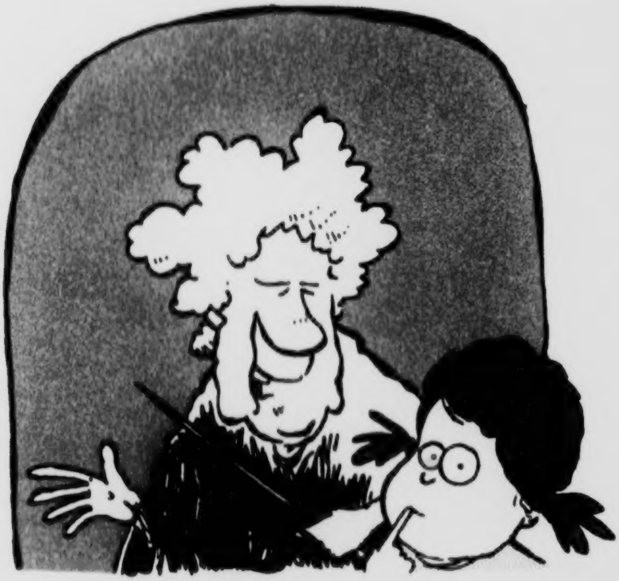
"Late that night as we all gathered in front of the hearth, my father gently carried my grandmother down the stairs. She looked up at the familiar keys and smiled faintly. Then she opened her hand. My mother placed the crystal key into it, and together they turned the key into winter."

For a moment, Clara and her mother sat silent. Then Clara brushed a tear from her own cheek. "Was it her last autumn?"

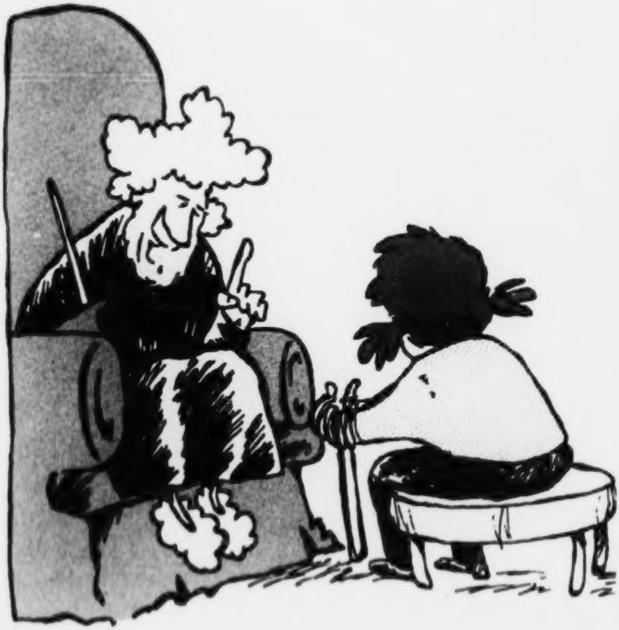
"Yes," said her mother. "But she lived to see another spring."

Clara looked over at the big chair on the other side of the hearth. "Grandmother?" she whispered.

The old woman opened her eyes, then stretched her fingers and reached for her knitting. She pointed one long needle at the four shining keys. "It'll be a long time before you get to turn them, Clara. You or your mother. Come here now and get on with this wool for me."

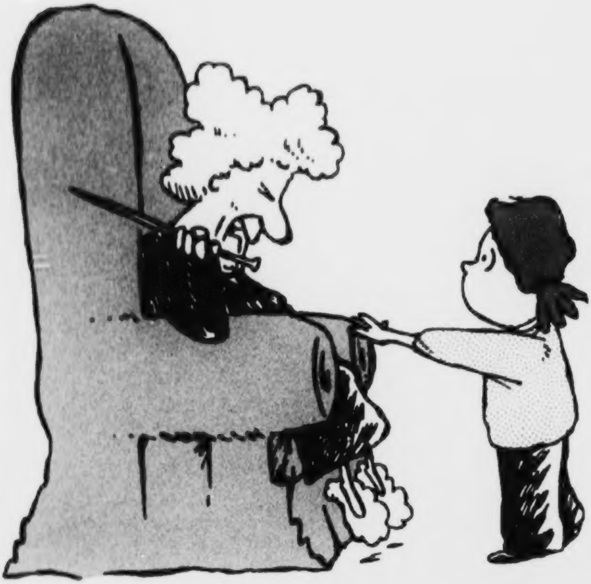


As Clara's mother went into the kitchen, Clara settled on a stool beside her grandmother, and the old woman handed her the wool. Then her fingers closed around Clara's."So you don't want summer to end, eh, child?" she said. "No more playing and swimming, just school and work?" She gave a low laugh. "When I was your age, I felt the same way."



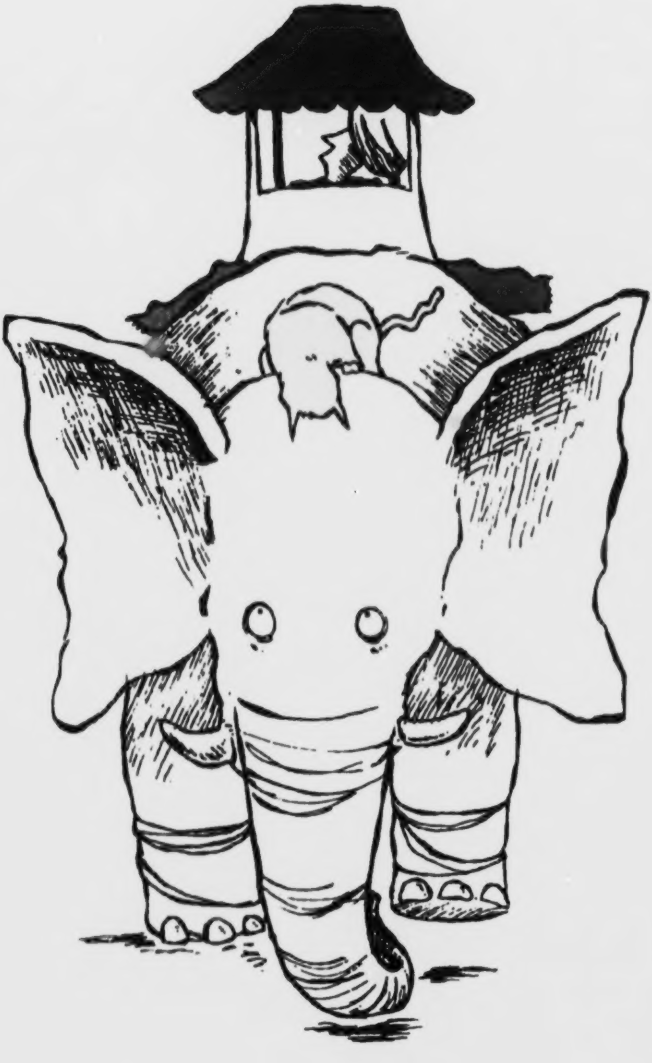
"You?" asked Clara, astonished. "You did?"

"Yes," said her grandmother. "Now, get on with this wool, and I'll tell you about the time I almost lost the key into autumn."



Things to Do *after* Reading the Story

Clara's mother hid the key into winter because she believed her grandmother would keep living if she did so. Talk about some other stories or movies where people try to change the course of history by interfering with it in some way.



Loaf of Bread

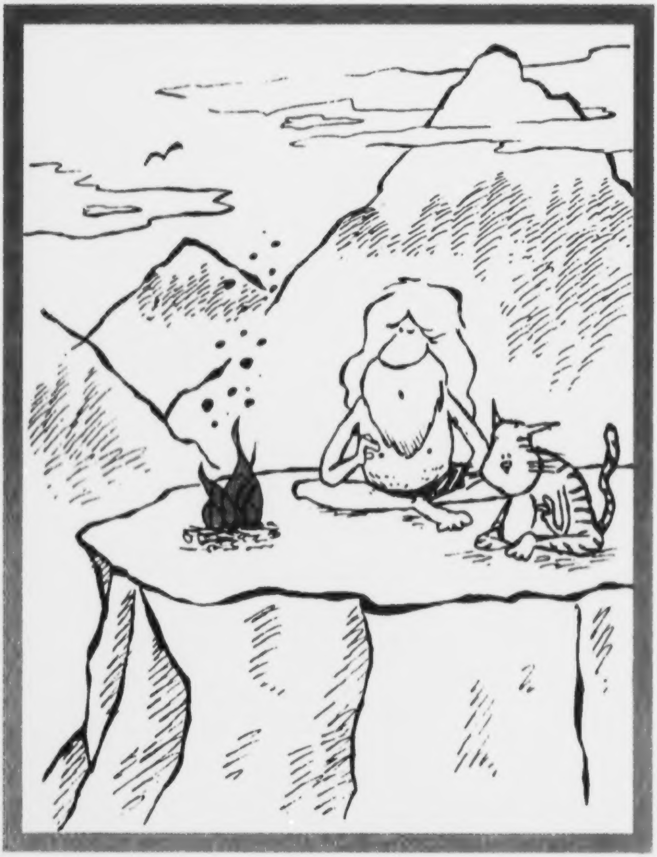
Retold by B. K. Sharma and
Sharon L. Pugh

Things to Do *before* Reading the Story

In many cultures of the world people believe in "reincarnation" or "rebirth." This means that they believe in people and even animals coming back to life in new bodies after they die. Share your ideas about what you think happens after a person dies. As you read the story, think about what might have happened to the characters if they had been reborn as people or as some other animal instead of cats.

Once upon a time two old cats lived in a small village in India, far from the big city, which they had never seen. These cats were the best of friends and spent many a long evening entertaining each other, and anyone else who cared to listen, with tales of their younger days.

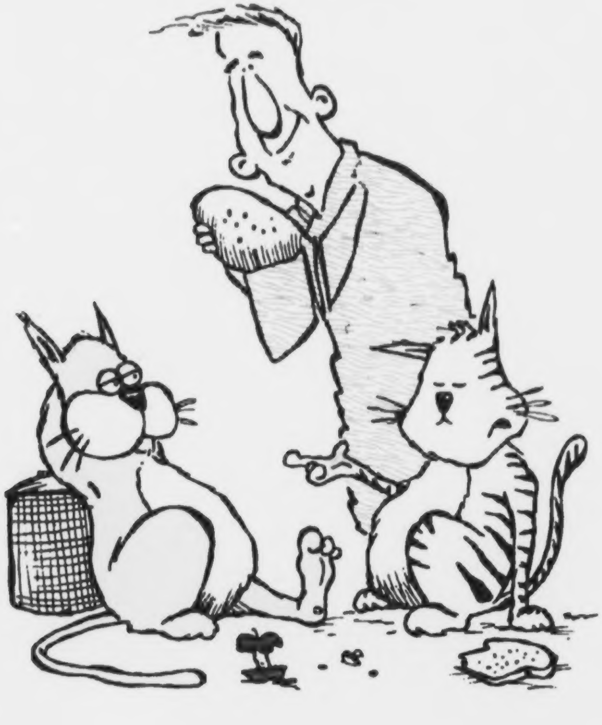
"Yes," said Subash, who was the same shade of yellow as a lion, "I have ridden on the head of the Maharajah's elephant, the first to see the crowds gathered for miles on end to admire us."



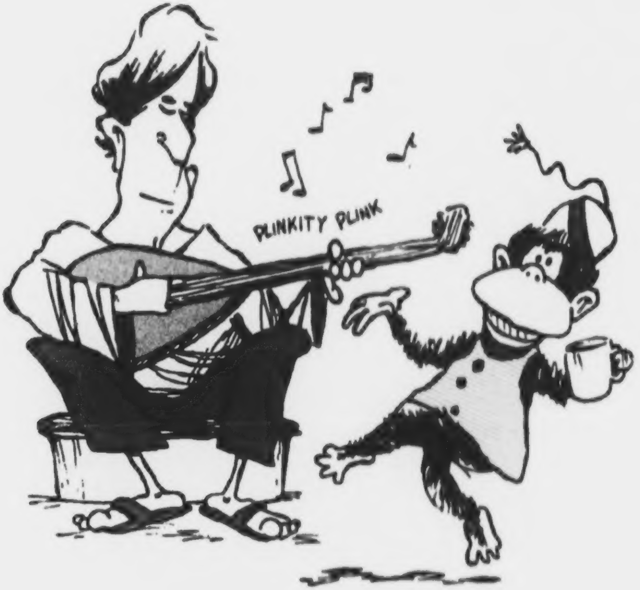
"Very impressive," replied Mukhtar, who had stripes like a tiger. "But I must tell you that I have sat by the fires of the Holy Men on the highest mountain, where great secrets were revealed to me."

And so they would go on, weaving grander and grander stories about where they had been and what they had done.

Oddly enough, the villagers, who were greatly amused by these tales, couldn't remember a single day when the two cats had not been right there in the village. Every evening they sat with the people, telling stories and waiting for the bits of food that always came their way. Indeed, both were so fat and lazy that it was hard to imagine them climbing to either the head of an elephant or the top of a mountain. But that didn't matter, because the villagers were always happy to listen to the stories and share their food with lion-colored Subash and tiger-striped Mukhtar.



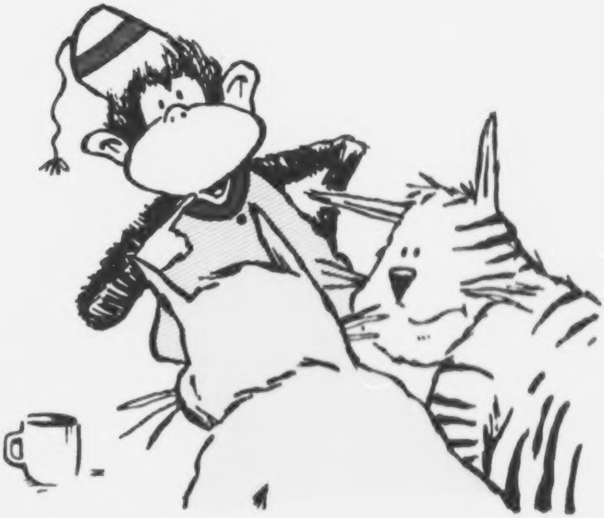
"These cats are certainly imaginative," the villagers often said. "Surely we are lucky to have the cleverest animals in all of India."



But one day things changed. A musician came into town, a man who played beautiful music on a sitar and had with him a monkey that danced gracefully to the melodies, turning and bowing as he collected coins in a tin cup. Evening after evening, the people gathered around the pair, admiring the playing and dancing, and dropping coins into the monkey's cup.

Now Subash and Mukhtar were silent as they too joined the crowd. They had never seen such an animal, twirling on two feet and holding a cup like a person. One evening, after the people had gone home, the cats decided to approach the monkey and find out more about how he had gained his skills.

The monkey, whose name was Babu, saw the cats coming from a distance. Observing their plump bodies and sleek fur, he knew that it had been a long time since they had tested themselves in the world. "Hello," said Babu, when the cats came near. "Please come closer. Hmmmm. Yes. Now I can see what kind of animals you are."

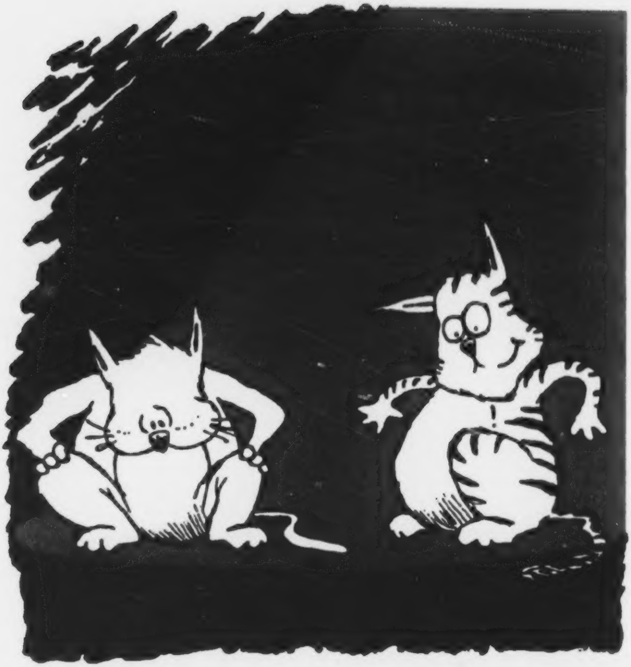


"Well, yes," Subash said. "Obviously we are cats."

"Yes, indeed," said Babu, "but not ordinary cats."

"No?" answered Mukhtar, who was inclined to agree though he wasn't sure why. "Why do you say that?"

"Step into that beam of moonlight," said Babu, motioning the cats to a spot where the light of the full moon broke through the trees. "There. Yes, I can see clearly that you are not ordinary cats at all."



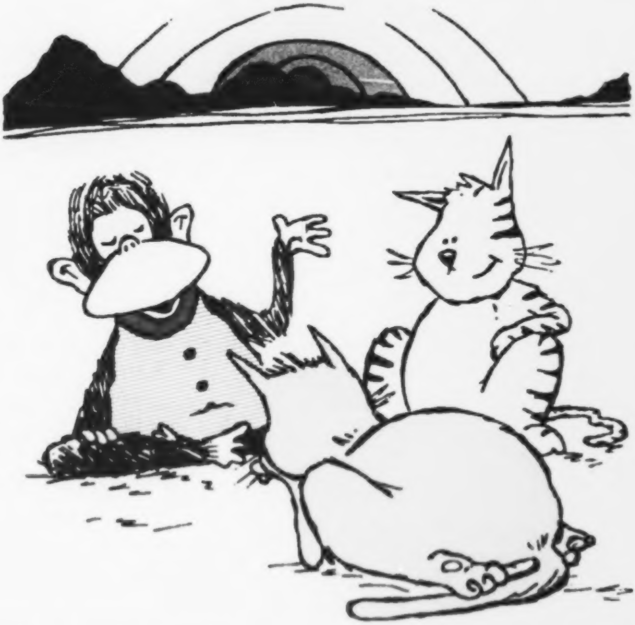
The cats looked down at themselves. Seeing their fur shine in the moonlight, they couldn't help admiring themselves.

"You," said Babu to Subash, "you were a lion in your past life." Subash looked back in astonishment. Yes, that must be right. It explained why he was such a fine, powerful, adventuresome beast.

"And you," said Babu to Mukhtar, "you were a tiger." And Mukhtar wondered why he hadn't thought of that himself since it was so clearly true.

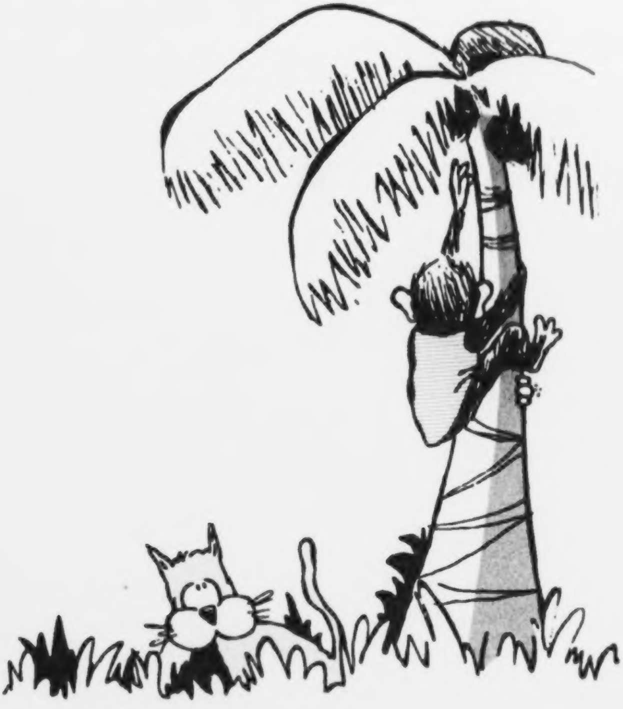
Now the cats came closer, amazed at Babu's wisdom, and wanted to know what he had been in his past life that made him so clever in this one.

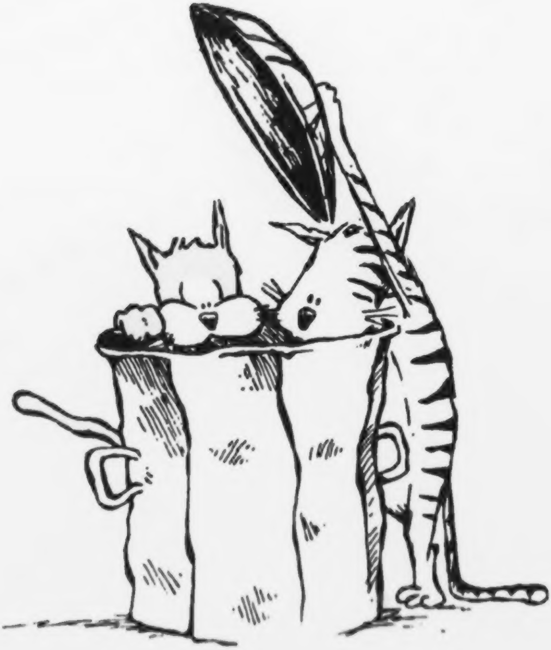
"Well," laughed Babu, "since I guessed your past lives correctly, you'll have to guess mine." And the cats agreed that this was fair. Then for the rest of the night they sat and listened to Babu's stories



of life with his master in the city. They had never heard of such a place or of the many interesting things that Babu described there. By the time the sun was peeking over the horizon in the east, they were sure that Babu was the wisest and cleverest animal in all of India.

That summer, a great drought came to the land. For weeks and months, no rain fell, and the crops did not grow. Now the people had to be careful with the little food they had stored, and they no longer could give extra scraps to the animals. Babu, of course, had little difficulty, since he could scamper up into trees and find fruits and coconuts growing there. But Subash and Mukhtar were not so lucky. It had been a long time since they had found their own food. They were so accustomed to the food that people gave them that they didn't like what they could find for themselves.



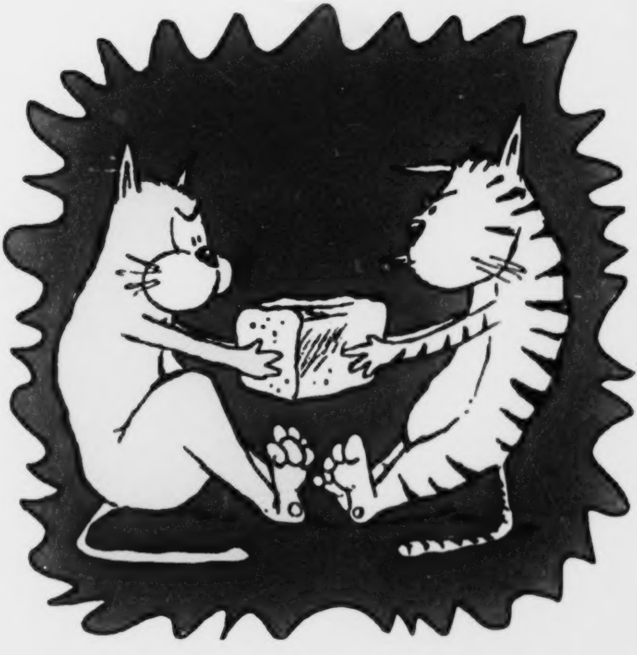


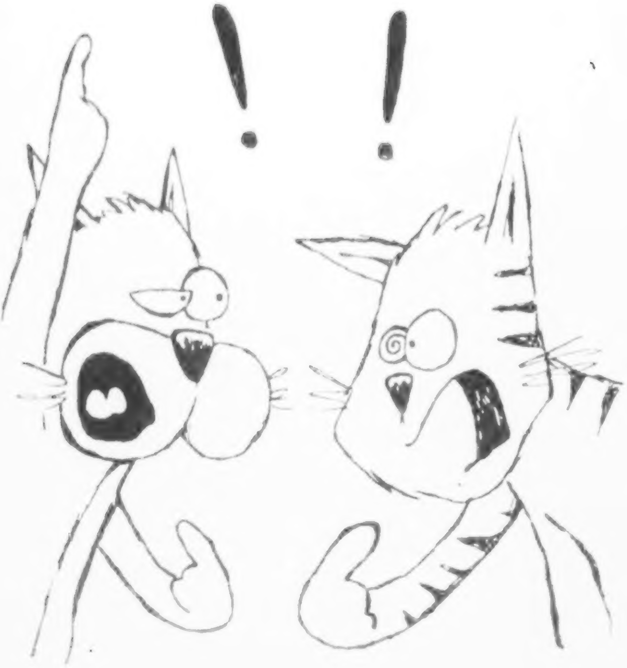
Life grew more and more difficult. The cats spent most of their time looking for any little scrap of food and found barely enough to stay alive. But while they grew hungrier every day, they were still cheered up by the thought that, in their past lives, one had been a lion and the other a tiger. Now their stories went back to those imagined times. "I remember when I was hardly more than a cub, the hunters almost caught me, but I was brave...." Subash would begin. And when it was his turn, Mukhtar would say, "I still remember the days I spent in the woodlands of the king...." And as their bodies grew thinner, their imaginations swelled.

One day as they were going along together, looking for food, they found a small loaf of bread that had fallen from a traveler's pack. Pouncing upon it, they both put their paws on it at the same time.

"It's mine," claimed Mukhtar. "I saw it first. Give it to me, and I'll share a bit of it with you."

"What do you mean?" answered Subash. "I saw it first. I'll take the loaf and give you a bit." And neither would take his paws off the bread for a moment.



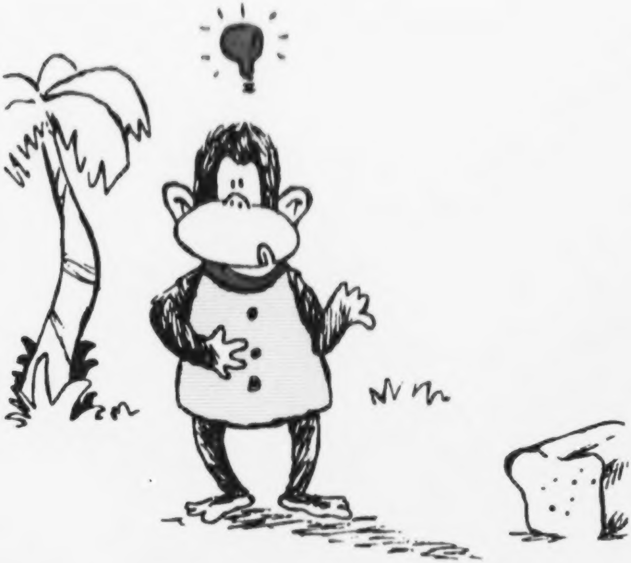


"Tigers before lions!" shouted Mukhtar. "In my past life I was the royal animal."

"No way!" yelled Subash back. "Lions are kings, and that's what I was in my past life."

For a moment it seemed as if they would have a terrific battle. But then they stopped, remembering their great friendship and many happy hours telling stories together. They decided to call Babu, the cleverest animal in the jungle, and let him decide who should have the loaf of bread.

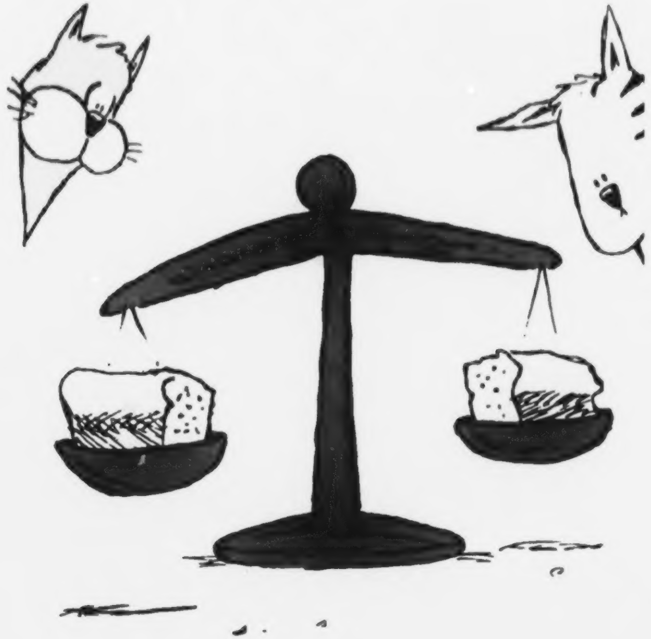
Now Babu had been spending his time in the trees, eating his mangoes, bananas, and coconuts, but it had been a long time since he had tasted bread. When he heard the cats calling, he scampered over and saw the lovely loaf of bread still on the ground between them.



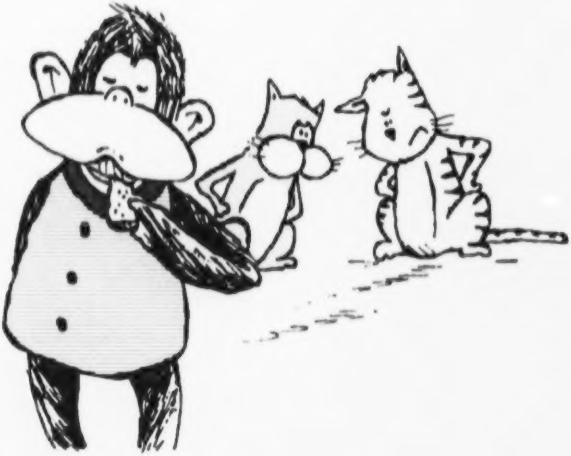
"Babu, Babu," called Subash and Mukhtar. "Help us. We have found this loaf of bread, but we can't agree on whose it is." Babu listened to their story and the claim each made that he had been the first to see the bread. But while he was listening, his mouth watered at the sight of the fresh brown loaf.

"Well," said Babu. "This is indeed a dilemma. But I think I know the solution. Wait here." The cats waited, both still holding onto the bread, until Babu came back with a set of scales.

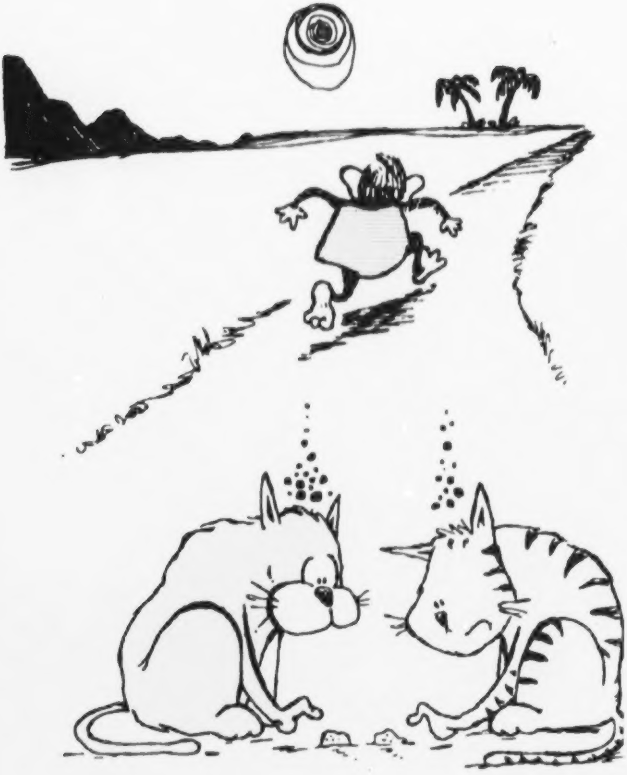
"Here," he said, "I'll divide the bread between you. And to be absolutely sure that each gets the same share, I'll use this set of scales." The cats thought that was indeed a brilliant solution. Who but Babu, the wise monkey, would have thought of it? They handed the loaf over to him, and he pulled it into two pieces. But when he had put a piece on each side of the scales, they saw that the left-hand balance was lower than the right one.



"No problem," said Babu, "I can fix that." And he picked up the left-hand piece of bread, took a bite of it, and put it back. Now, alas, the right-hand balance was lower. "Oh dear," said Babu. "I took a little too much, but don't worry." And he picked up the right-hand piece of bread and took a bite. But when he put it back, now the left-hand balance was lower again.



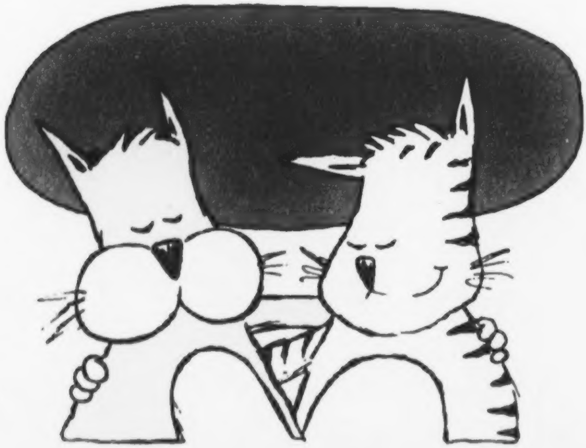
And so it went. While the two cats stared, turning their heads back and forth, Babu took a bite first from one piece of bread and then from the other. And then, when there was only a morsel left on each side of the scales, Mukhtar suddenly shouted, "Stop," and snatched the piece from the right side, and Subash snatched the piece from the left. Now, at last, the scales were empty and perfectly balanced.



"There," said Babu. "Now the problem is solved." And he hurried away, leaving the cats to eat the remaining bits of bread.

"Well," said Mukhtar as they walked sadly away. "I think Babu was a magician in a former life."

"Yes," said Subash, "Either that or a thief." And the two friends agreed that from then on they would stick together and solve their own problems, instead of quarreling and taking their troubles to someone else.



Things to Do *after* Reading the Story

Have you ever been fooled by someone like the cats that were tricked by the monkey in the story? How did you act when you found out you had been fooled? Talk about what can happen after you trick someone and get away with it. What are some other ways that the cats could have solved their problem besides asking for the monkey's help?

We hope you have had fun with these stories!

Books of Special Interest to Parents

How Can I Prepare My Young Child for Reading? by Paula C. Grinnell. Presents ideas to assist parents in preparing their children for reading. Focuses on children from birth through kindergarten. ($1.75)

You Can Help Your Young Child with Writing, by Marcia Baghban. Suggests methods parents can use to help develop their children's writing at home. Offers writing and reading activities. ($1.75)

Beginning Literacy and Your Child, by Steven B. Silvern and Linda R. Silvern. Recommends ways parents can participate in the development of their children's literacy. Provides activities for talking, reading, writing, and listening. ($1.75)

Helping Your Child Become a Reader, by Nancy L. Roser. Provides suggestions for parents to help them encourage their children to read. Offers several practical activities for parents. ($1.75)

Creating Readers and Writers, by Susan Mandel Glazer. Suggests that parents: (1) encourage the use of language; (2) build positive attitudes toward reading, writing, and speaking; and (3) demonstrate the purposes of literacy. Includes book suggestions classified by age groups. ($1.75)

You Can Encourage Your High School Student to Read, by Jamie Myers. Offers practical ideas parents can use to encourage their teenagers to read more. Shows how reading can serve adolescents' needs, and presents future needs that reading can fulfill. ($1.75)

Your Child's Vision Is Important by Caroline Beverstock. Discusses how vision affects school work, how different eye problems affect vision, and how to spot vision problems. Includes suggestions for dealing with vision difficulties. ($1.75)

101 Ideas to Help Your Child Learn to Read and Write, by Mary and Richard Behm. Ideas are presented to help parents use resources from around the home to promote literacy. The activities are educationally sound and fun for the parent and child to do together. ($6.50)

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Give Reading a Chance

The voluntary program described in *Give Reading a Chance,* by Cindy Butherus, encourages elementary school children to develop daily read-at-home habits. Students can either read on their own or have a parent read to them for at least fifteen minutes each school day. Students then bring slips to school that are signed by a parent, verifying that they took time to read at home. Children with at least fifteen daily slips a month become "Top Read-at-Homers." Even if a child is not recognized in a given month as a Top Read-at-Homer, she can accumulate read-at-home days over the course of a year and get recognition after achieving certain levels. The awards and prizes given to children who accumulate read-at-home days are designed to stimulate interest in reading beyond the classroom. The program also provides for the encouragement of summertime reading.

The *Give Reading a Chance* program is not meant to be used as a reading marathon, but offers a fresh approach to an old problem—how to get children to love and enjoy reading at home. Besides a love of reading, the program is designed to develop responsibility and independence in children by asking them to return their own reading verification slips to school, and keep their own read-at-home records. The book describes the program's flexibile, built-in incentive system. It contains sample copy-ready read-at-home slips, daily progress charts, classroom displays, letters and other documents, and incentives that can help teachers to effectively implement *Give Reading a Chance* in the classroom. Its clear style and practical format make the book especially appealing to teachers who want an easy-to-use manual for creating a reading enhancement program in their school.

As the author herself says, *Give Reading a Chance* is "inexpensive and effective—everything you need to start today is included in [the book]. This package can be used year after year!" Jim Trelease, author of several handbooks on reading enhancement, says that "*Give Reading a Chance* is a thorough and ambitious program, one that certainly deserves emulation."

Available from Hug-a-Book Publications, 390 West 'A' Street, Lebanon, OR, 97355, (503) 259-3027.

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Stories for Children and Parents:

1. Make the story fun for children—your primary audience. The adult reading along will enjoy the story if the child does.
2. Make sure that your story is acceptable to parents. We do not want parents to reject the story because it is inappropriate for their children. Writing a story of interest to children and at the same time pleasing to parents is a big challenge.
3. Your story should be no longer than eight double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.
4. Correct grammar and syntax are important. For the most part we choose to model correct standard English.
5. Be careful about the vocabulary you use in your story. Rule out really long and difficult-to-pronounce words. Use "plain" English, when you can—words that have English roots rather than French or Latin ones.
6. Make your stories gender inclusive. Do not use sexist terminology or ideas. Our stories must be interesting to both boys and girls.
7. You may illustrate your own story, but they must be line drawings in pen and ink only. The drawings must be able to be scanned, so too much detail will not work.

Articles for Parents:

1. Articles should contain practical information and helpful strategies. Anecdotes and other experiences modeling useful learning methods are particularly desirable.
2. Your article should be no longer than four double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.

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AAAARRGH!
INK

Future Issues of *Parents and Children Together*

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- *Creative Expression through Music and Dance*
- *Success with Test-Taking*
- *Poetry*
- *Library*
- *Earth Day/Environment*
- *Different Cultures*
- *Improving Your Child's Memory*
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November 1991

Parents and Children Together

Computers and Your Child

GOBBLE-GOB
GOBBLETY-
GOB-GOB-
GOBBLE-GOB

Read-along Stories:

Turkey Tallies
No-Name
Nathan's Secret Turkey

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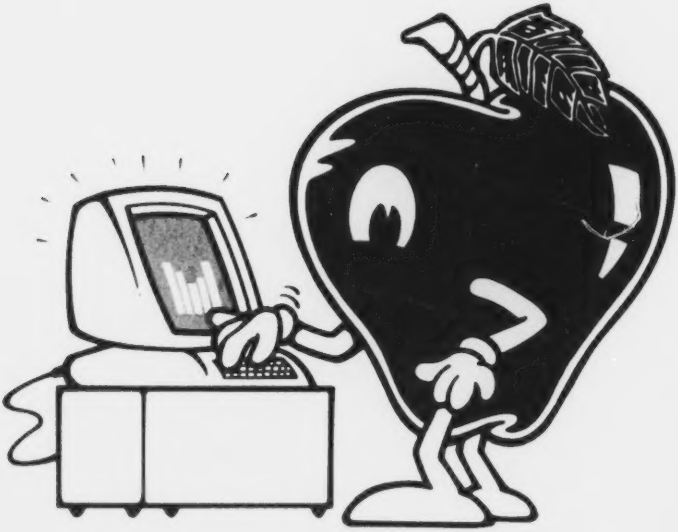
This booklet has a companion audio tape on "Computers and Your Child." Occasionally there are directions on the tape that do not appear in the booklet or headings in the booklet that aren't spoken on the tape.



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  by Marilyn Kratz

Getting Started

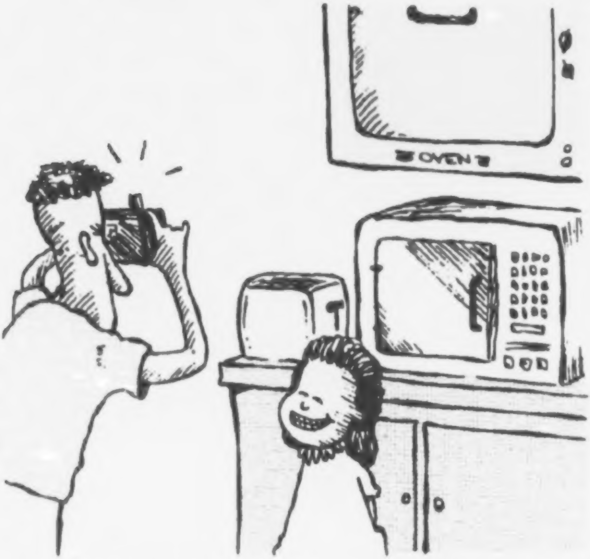
Welcome to this issue of *Parents and Children Together*. In this issue we will look at computers, and how they can enhance and further your child's education.

On side B of the tape (and in the second half of the booklet) we have three read-along stories. We encourage you to listen to these stories and to read them with your children, so that they can participate in the excitement of story reading. Of course, your child can also listen to the stories alone, if you wish.

GOBBLE-GOB-
GOBBLETY-
GOB-GOB-
GOBBLE-GOB

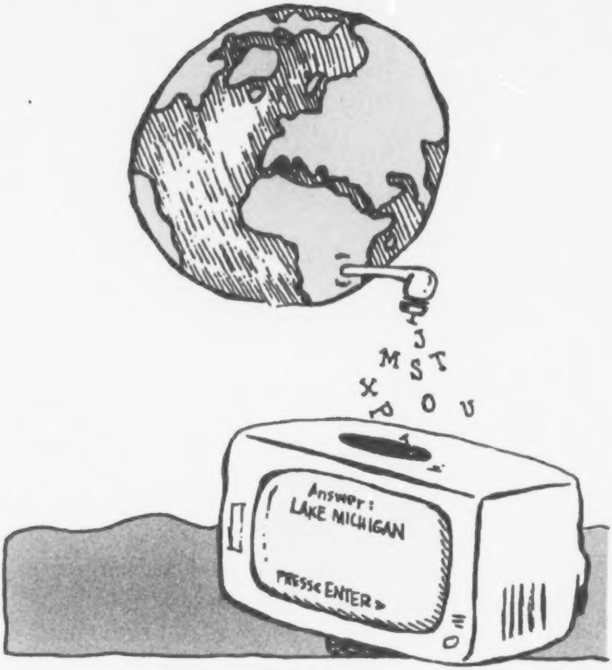
Computers and Your Child

A few weeks ago, I spent the morning running errands. First, I stopped by the bank for some cash. The bank was not open yet, so I used the automatic teller machine. Then I made a quick trip to the grocery and watched as the cashier scanned my items without once looking at a price. The next stop was the library. I was able to find the book I wanted by searching the catalog by way of computer. Finally, I stopped in for a quick bite to eat at McDonald's. The person at the front counter used a computer to take my order and then make change. While we may not all be experts at using computers, computers are all around us and affect many aspects of our everyday lives.



We also can find other types of technology in our own homes: calculators, VCRs, cameras, microwave ovens, and video games. Even though we may not have taken electronics or computer classes to learn how to use these gadgets, we have become familiar with technology in our homes and most likely in our jobs.

Many jobs that are not considered "technical" require computer skills these days, and employers list computer literacy as one of the basic skills they want their employees to have. You do not need to train your children for their future careers. But helping them feel comfortable with computers will make it easier for them to adjust to a world that is quickly becoming dependent on technology.

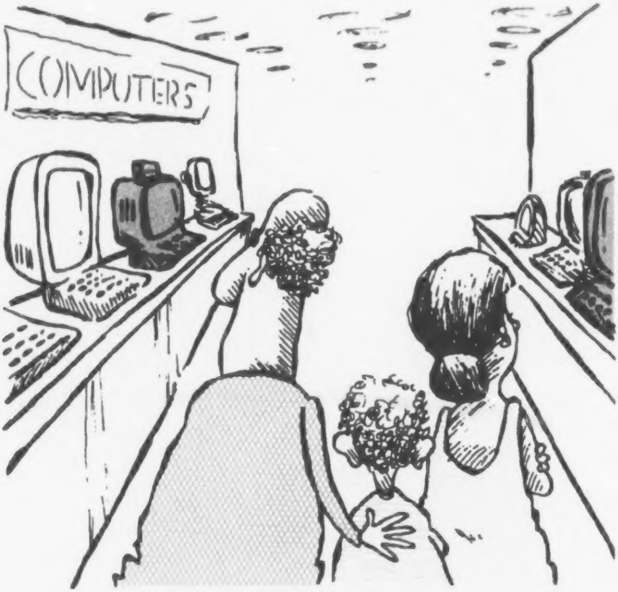


If your child is at ease as a computer user, she will be able to use computers to tap into the world of information around her. Instead of using her time and energy worrying about a machine, she can use the computer as a tool to assist her. Because our ability to store data has increased dramatically in the past few years, we have more information at our fingertips. Having more information is great, but we must have access to it before it can help us. If your child knows how to obtain information, then she will have a means for further learning.

As parents, we do not have to hold weekly classes in our homes to help our children take advantage of computers for learning, but there are various ways to expose your children to computers. Here are a few:

1. Use your local school.

Most schools have computers in classrooms or a computer lab. Encourage your child to take a class, go to an after-school program, or attend a summer workshop on computers. You yourself may also want to sign up for an adult-education class at your local vocational school, library, or community college. You can discuss and share what you learn about computers with your child.



2. Go to the library.

Local libraries, learning centers, and museums usually have computers available for public use. They may also provide you with instruction you need by answering your questions or by holding a class on how to use their particular computer. Not only do libraries have personal computers for your use, they also have computerized catalogs and newspaper and magazine indexes. Take time to help your child learn how to search for items in the library by using the computer. As he becomes familiar with using the computer to locate information, he develops a good attitude about computers and increases his confidence in his ability to use them.

3. Find out what is new.

Computer or electronics stores such as Radio Shack are always willing to demonstrate their products for you. A local retail store might have interesting new software programs for

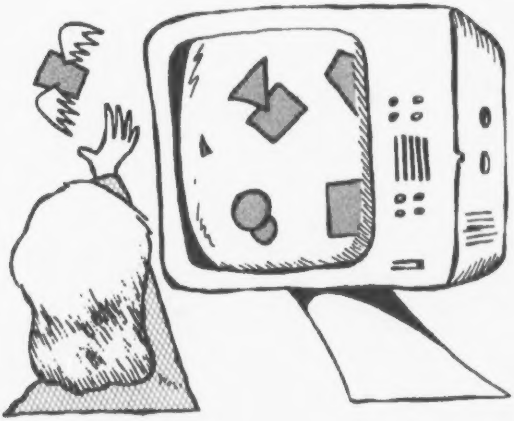
you to review. Spending an evening seeing what is new in "the world of computers" can be a fun, inexpensive way to help your child learn.

4. Let your child play computer games.

A game is a great way to help familiarize your child with a computer. If your child first uses the computer for fun, then chances are she will be more comfortable using it as a tool for learning. Games teach concepts of design and pattern, promote curiosity, and present a challenge. Also, watching the screen while using the mouse or keyboard improves hand-eye coordination.

BLIP BEEP BOOP BOOP

Whether in the home or at school, your children can use a computer as an opportunity to further their learning in many ways. Here are a few examples of the ways your children might use computers in different subject areas.

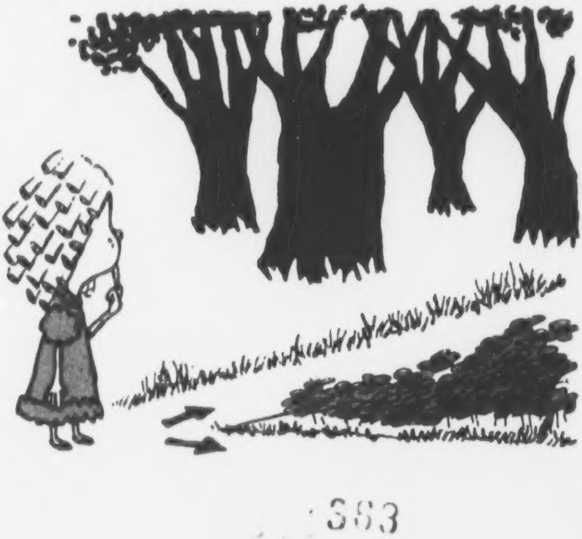


Math

- Computation exercises can help your child practice math problems, and the computer does not become impatient or tired. Bookkeeping style programs called spread sheets, enable a child to see how budgets work. Playing with spread sheets may help your child plan the spending of his allowance. “LOGO”, a program which uses numbers, angles, and other mathematical ideas, enables children to experience geometric concepts by writing directions and then watching geometric figures move around the screen. Learning to program a computer aids in problem solving. A child can write instructions for the computer, observe what happens, and then figure out how to make changes if necessary. There are also software programs that allow users to make choices in response to questions, thereby interacting with the program to affect outcomes.

Reading

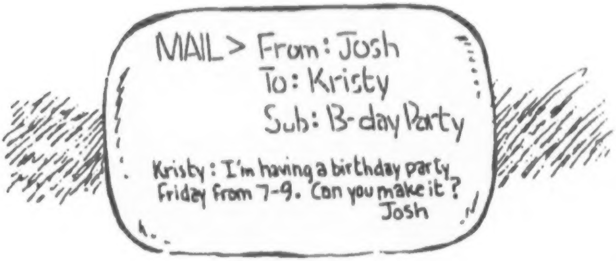
- Some computer programs allow a child to interact with the characters in a story by having the characters ask the child questions. For example, in the story "Goldilocks and the Three Bears," Goldilocks could be walking through the forest and come to a fork in the path. Goldilocks could then ask the child if he should take the left fork with all the flowers or the right fork with the dark, overhanging trees. The choice the child makes gives him the opportunity to change the story line. And he could always return to the beginning and make



the other choice the next time. Computers may also present background information, display a picture of the story, and give definitions of vocabulary words and simpler versions of the text. These options enable the user to better understand the story.

Writing

Children used to hate revising and rewriting compositions. If they use a word processing program, they can quickly revise and print a fresh copy. This gives them more time to develop better quality writing. Instead of spending their time recopying, they might be motivated to develop a character further, or write a more complex plot. Students may also be more creative in their writing because they know it will be easy to change if it doesn't work out the first time. They won't be as afraid to risk expressing themselves if they know they can go back at any time and make changes. Many children also find electronic mail a fun way to write messages to each other, and some enjoy producing a class or school newsletter with their computers.



MAIL> From: Josh
To: Kristy
Sub: B-day Party

Kristy: I'm having a birthday party Friday from 7-9. Can you make it?
Josh

Science

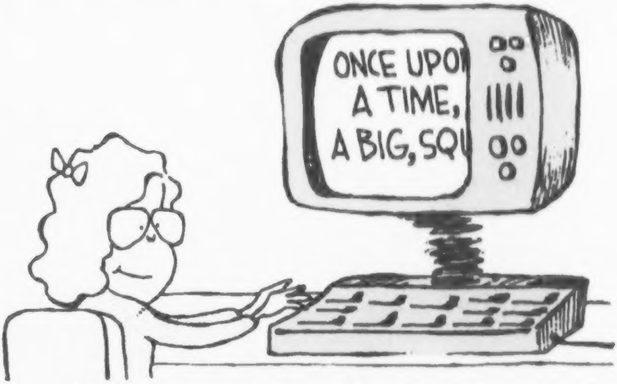
Imagine watching a computer screen on which a glacier develops before your eyes or coal takes shape. A computer is able to simulate these events so that your child can see them happen. Experiments may be performed and reactions observed without the cost or danger of wrong measurements or poor judgment. For example, computers are able to simulate what happens when chemicals are combined and students can observe the reactions that occur.

Music and Art

You might think computers are only beneficial for reading, writing, and arithmetic, but they also serve as outlets for children's creative abilities. Sketching, drawing geometric patterns and shapes, and experimenting with color combinations may be done using art programs. If the computer has the capability, a student may write a piece of music and listen to it or watch the precise movements of a dancer.

Special Learners

✦ There is software that accommodates the needs of handicapped children by stimulating the individual child's unique form of communication. Different programs have been developed to help such children learn in nontraditional ways. For example, verbally-impaired children can actually view sound waves and match the sound waves of their own voice, thus improving their speaking ability. For those with sight problems, the text of a story or textbook can be enlarged on a computer screen for easier reading.



Computers are part of our society and will be in our children's future. Children do not have to become computer programmers or systems analysts, but they do need to be able to use the computer as a tool for learning and as a means of accessing the world of information. By helping your children become familiar with the world of computers, you help them further their learning and continue their education.

Computer Bits

Learning about computers can be confusing sometimes because of "computer talk." Here are the meanings of a few words people use when discussing computers.

BASIC—"Beginner's All-Purpose Symbolic Instruction Code"; a programming language that is relatively easy to learn

bit—smallest unit of information in a computer

boot—the automatic running of built-in programs that occurs when the user turns on the computer

bug—an error in a computer program

byte—represents 8 bits

CPU—"Central Processing Unit"; the brain of the computer

command—an order from a user to a computer that tells the computer what to do

cursor—blinking dash or square that appears on the screen

data—information

disk—instrument on which information can be stored magnetically (a disk is to a computer what a record is to a record player)

disk drive—instrument used to read information on disks

drill and practice—type of computer program that provides opportunities to practice skills and review facts

hardware—the computer and other physical equipment related to it

input devices—agents used to enter data into computers, for example, a keyboard, light pen, joy stick or mouse.

LOGO—a programming language which can be used by children using few commands (usually used in the study of geometry and arithmetic)

memory—the part of a computer system that stores information

mouse—an input device that the user rolls on a flat surface

output devices—agents used to transport data from a computer, for example, a printer or monitor (computer screen)

peripherals—input and output instruments, for example, printers, cassette tape recorders, light pens, or scanners

program—set of commands that directs a computer

RAM—"Random Access Memory"; temporary memory that can be changed by a user, which is lost when the computer is turned off

ROM—"Read Only Memory"; memory built into a computer that cannot be changed by a user

simulation—type of computer program that imitates a realistic situation enabling a user to solve problems or calculate cause-and-effect relationships

software—computer programs

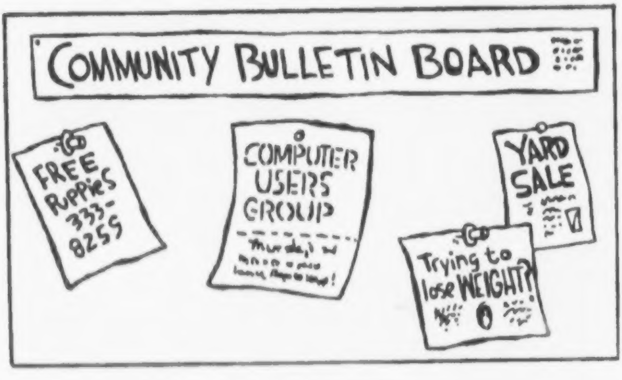
tutorial—type of computer program that provides instruction and practice

Questions about Computers

Now we will explore both buying and using a computer. Here are some of the more frequent questions parents ask concerning computers and their children.

I'm not sure if I can afford to purchase or lease a computer, but if I do, where should I go, and what do I need to know?

Buying or renting a computer is a great investment in your child's future, but find out as much as possible before you spend your money. Look for a local computer-user group. This is a mutual help group. You can locate a computer-user group at your local school, community college, library, or computer or radio & electronics store.


COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD
FREE Puppies 333-8255
COMPUTER USERS GROUP
YARD SALE
Trying to lose WEIGHT?

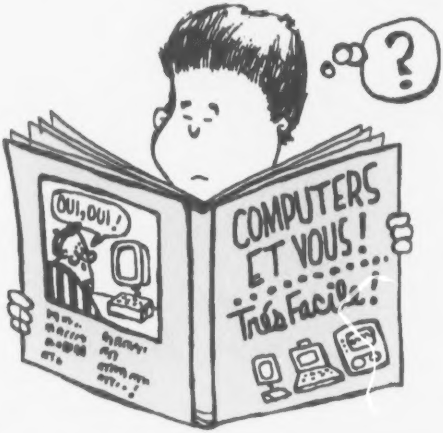
Members of a user group can share advice, information, instruction, and knowledge of specific computers. They might know the names of reputable dealers, or have used computers for sale.

Here are some things to find out before you buy a computer:

1. Are training and instruction included in the purchase?
2. What software and additional hardware are included in the purchase?
3. What kind of warranty and service policy are provided?

4. If the computer needs repair, is it available?
5. Can the computer be expanded by adding hardware and memory?
6. Does the monitor have color capability? Can the computer talk, make music and sounds, and do graphics?

7. What different kinds of software can it run?


?
OUI, OUI!
COMPUTERS ET VOUS!...
Très Facile!

8. Is the instruction manual easy to understand?
9. Is it the same brand of computer that your child has at school or is it compatible?
10. Will your child be able to write her own programs on this model?
11. Is there a user group for support?
12. Will this computer meet my child's needs now, and during her next 4-5 years in school?

My daughter told me we could have access to free computer software through something she called public domain software. Can you explain what this is and how to find it?

Public domain software is low-cost or free software that is available to the public. There are several different ways to locate this kind of software.

User groups and computer clubs usually have their own collections of public domain software. Members write programs and exchange them with other members. Groups often swap their software libraries with other groups in order to build their collections.

Another avenue to find free or inexpensive software is to contact mail-order companies. Write or call the following for more information or catalogs of their products:

The Public (software) Library
P.O. Box 35705
Houston, TX 77235-5705
(713)665-7017

PC-SIG
1030 D East Duane Avenue
Sunnyvale, CA 94086
(800)245-6717
(800)222-2996 in CA

Shareware Express
32302 Camino Capistrano
Suite 204
P.O. Box 219
San Juan Capistrano, CA
92693-0219

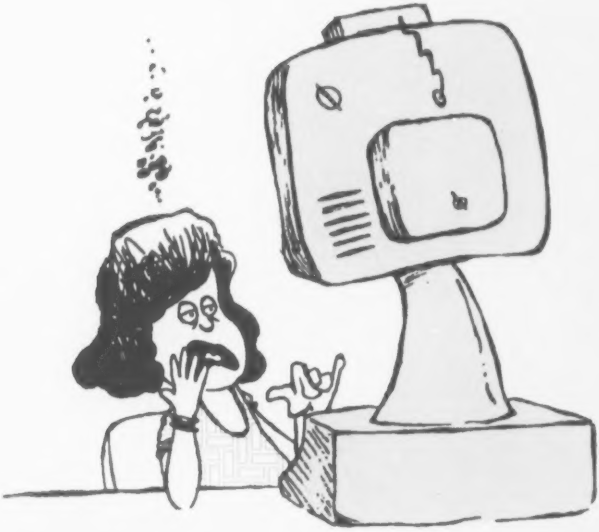
Software Innovations
1309 E. Northern Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85020

Public Brand Software
P.O. Box 51315
Indianapolis, IN 46251

You can also obtain public domain software by using your computer. Phones and bulletin board systems allow you to send and receive software via your computer. Ask members of user groups or inquire at the library for more information on how to do this.

My son spends hours playing games on his computer, and he uses it for homework. Can children spend too much time at a computer?

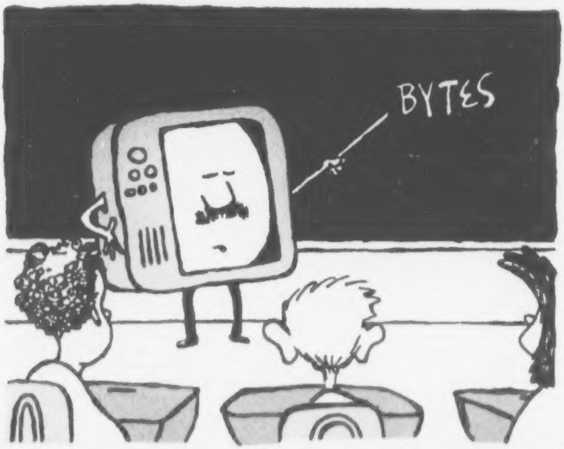
Too much of anything isn't usually a good idea. Computers are fast and can give a user instant feedback. If most of your child's interactions are with computers and not people, he might become less patient because he is accustomed to receiving instant answers or gratification.



A child who spends most of his time with computers might also fall behind in developing social skills. Healthy interactions with people develop from being with others and modeling how others relate. A machine cannot give emotional feedback, human warmth, and love.

A child's physical well-being can also be affected by spending too much time in front of a computer. Children using computers are exposed to the same problems that professional computer operators encounter. These include problems with vision, muscles, lower back pain, and radiation exposure.

Regulate the time your child spends at his computer. It is just like television; it can be educational, or it can be harmful if overused. Encourage your child to become involved in activities, and provide him with other kinds of entertainment.



Why use a computer at school when there are teachers? What advantages are there to using a computer in place of a person?

A computer does not replace a teacher; it may serve as an extension of a teacher. Teachers usually cannot give each student large amounts of individualized instruction or practice time, but the computer can. In short, computers are patient, dependable, and predictable. A computer can repeat itself for hours, and not become tired or irritable. It treats all children in the same way, and does not judge a child if he gives a wrong answer. Some programs can be modified to adjust to a student's own speed or rate of learning and difficulty level.

Another bonus of using computers is motivation. Students who do not want to practice math might be more willing to do so if they could work out problems on a computer. Other children might be more willing to revise their writing to make it better, if they did not have to re-copy the entire composition just to move a few sentences.

Computers encourage independent learning. A student does not have to wait for a teacher's undivided attention to move ahead. Cooperative work is also possible when using a computer. Working together, students can discuss and then revise a lesson or project on which they are working. Best of all, if a child enjoys using a computer, it can make learning fun.

If you have questions about your child's use of computers, please write to us, and we will try to answer them for you. You may find your question in another issue of *Parents and Children Together.*

Write to:
Editor, *Parents and Children Together*
Indiana University
2805 E. 10th Street, Suite 150
Bloomington, IN 47408-2698

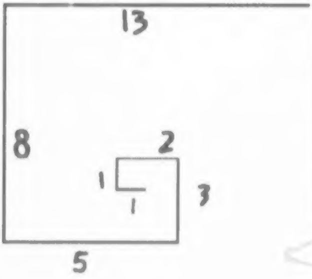
* * *

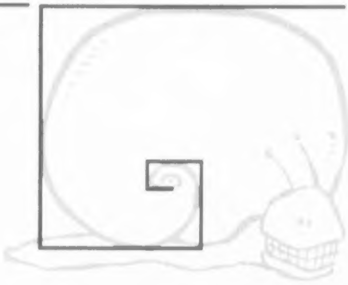
Fibonacci Fun

- The Fibonacci sequence is a sequence of numbers that appears in various forms in nature. The spirals of pine cones, flowers, and sea shells exhibit this sequence. It appears in the same way spirals unfold. You can produce this sequence by adding the two previous numbers together to produce the third. (If you want to speed up the process, use a calculator.) For example:

  1 + 1 = 2, 1 + 2 = 3, 2 + 3 = 5, 3 + 5 = 8

  Help your child measure and draw a helix like the one below. Then let her draw her own spiral according to the pattern.





Word Search

Have your child search for these words in the grid below.

BASIC
BIT
BOOT
BUG
BYTE
COMMAND
CPU
CURSOR
DATA
DISK
DISK DRIVE
HARDWARE
INPUT DEVICES
LOGO
OUTPUT DEVICES
PERIPHERALS
PROGRAM
RAM
ROM
SIMULATION
SOFTWARE
TUTORIAL

S O F T W A R E G P L I C C J R T X Y O J
W Y H U W C F U Z C G J O A M V E M N O G
P H X T T M N R I F F D M W G I T V H B D
U I D O A M G M D U Q I M D Z O B E I P U
N Q I R V B F M E B I W A F S K E R F L B
A M S I M U L A T I O N N J L J L H Y B I
Q L K A U G Y I N P U T D E V I C E S L Y
B M D L R D E B K R T T T A H I D K T D T
C W R I L S Y N O O P E H S T F Y C W V V
S J I Q S D L S G G U E A X O A S N K R O
S L V J D K R O M R T T R T A G F T L J S
F T E V I U L V R A D V D I T O Y V F O F
B A S I C I U L K M E L W E P L O T H W T
O D Z E U W E R I T V U A P Y H T T O E R
O Q O U O X P G Y D I L R C H H E K K B G
T T I B L S I B B T C I E A P P K R L T A
O S Z R M T S I N T E P Y E N F J W A M Z
R C U H N J G T S P S G U P N F B O V L Q
K D R N D X M E D G W E P K F A U C T C S

(The solution is on page 75.)

Books for Parents and Children

On pages 28–36, we have put together lists of books for parents and children. Some of these books are about computers and technology. We encourage you to take time to read a few of them with your child.

At the beginning of this issue, we mentioned that Side B of the audio tape contains three stories that are designed to be read-along stories. You may want to look ahead at these stories before you read along with your child. It is also important to talk about the story ahead of time.

Before reading the story, talk about the title or things that might happen in the story. Then, after the story is finished, talk about it again. By the way, if in the middle of the story something funny or interesting happens, it's O.K. to stop the tape and discuss the event, or ask your child questions such as "What happened at the first Thanksgiving?" or "Have you ever been teased at school?" and then follow it up with a why or why not. These questions make your conversation about the story more natural and valuable.

When you and your child are ready, turn the tape to Side B and listen to the stories as you read along together, or you may read the stories aloud while your child reads along in the booklet.

* * * * * * *

Books for Parents

Alfred Glossbrenner's MASTER GUIDE to Free Software for IBMs and Compatible Computers, by Alfred Glossbrenner. Covers free software basics for IBMs and compatible computers. Topics include background, sources, printers, utilities, user groups, bulletin board networks, database, word-processing, spreadsheets, communications, accounting, and on-line usage.

The Computer: History, Workings, Uses & Limitations, by Judith L. Gersting and Michael C. Gemignani. Provides a thorough introduction to computers. Outlines the ways in which computers are used in society. Covers problem solving using a computer, and introduces BASIC and Pascal.

Kids and Computers: The Parents' Microcomputer Handbook, by Eugene Galanter. Describes microcomputers and explains how parents can share them with their children. Discusses programming, how to buy a microcomputer, and the possible dangers involved in computer use.

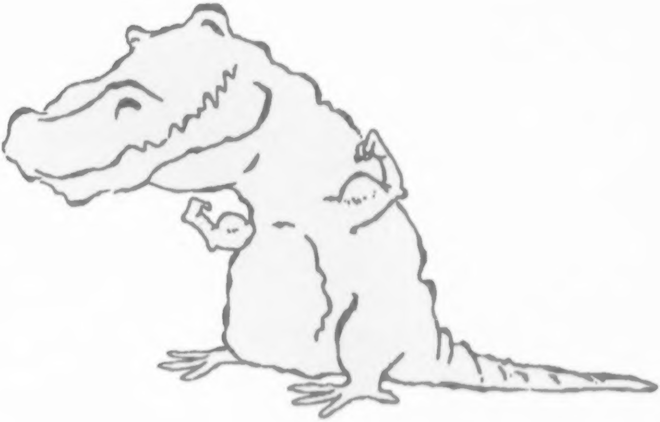
Help Your Child Succeed with A Computer, by Carol and Herbert Klitzner. Proposes ways for parents to recognize the skills, ambitions, and interests of their children in order to select and utilize the best computer for them.

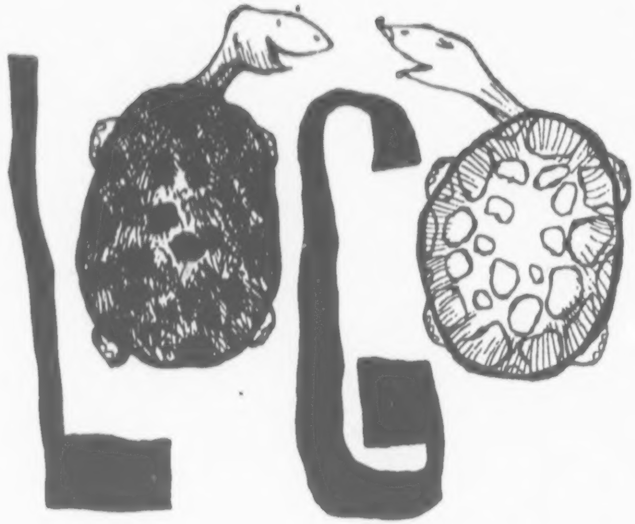
Books to Read Together

Ages 4-6

Meet the Computer, by Seymour Simon. Covers the different parts of a computer and explains how they work. Bright cartoons illustrate the text.

The Dinosaur Alphabet Book, by Jerry Pallotta. Presents assorted dinosaurs for every letter of the alphabet. An illustration and description accompany each creature.





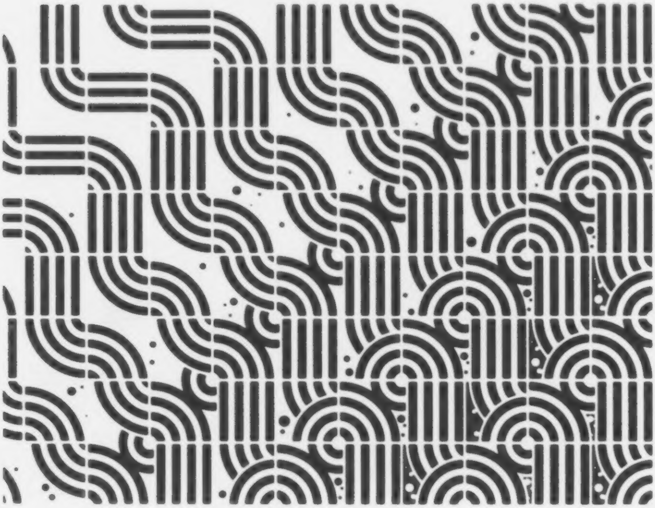
Turtle Talk: A Beginner's Book of LOGO, Seymour Simon. Little green turtles guide the reader through an introduction to LOGO. Gives some computer terms and graphics instructions.

Ages 6-8

The Creative Kid's Guide to Home Computers, by Fred D'Ignazio. An activity book filled with games and projects for kids to do using a computer. Includes art, music, poetry, science, writing, math, and networking.

The Simon & Schuster Question & Answer Book: Computers, by Daniel Cohen. Answers kids' questions in a simple, easy-to-understand format. Covers the history of computers, how they work, and their future.

Drawing & Painting with the Computer, by Don Bolognese and Robert Thornton. Shows how a computer can be used as a drawing and painting tool. Includes color and black-and-white illustrations.

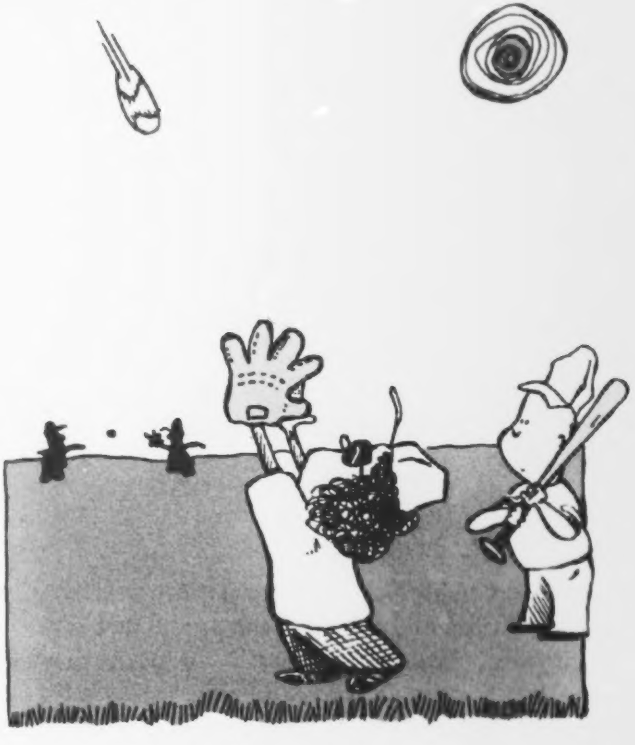


Ages 8-10

The Random House Book of Computer Literacy, by Ellen Richman. Introduces computers and how they work. Examines computers in society. Last twelve chapters deal with BASIC programming.

The Pocket Calculator Game Book, by Edwin Schlossberg and John Brockman. Fifty games to play and puzzles to solve using a calculator. Represents a wide variety of activities that can be played alone or with other players.

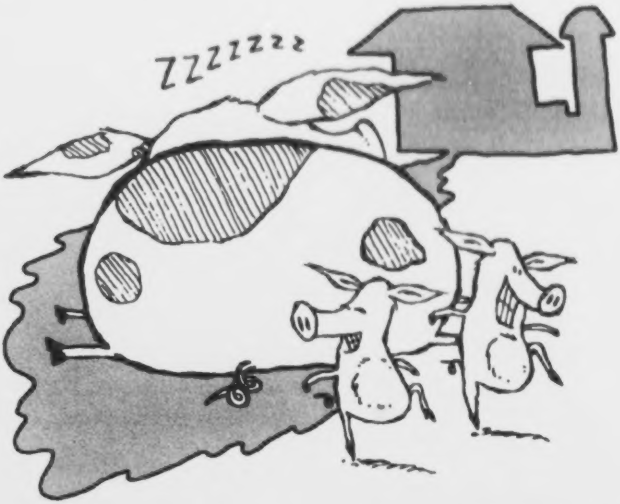
Supercharged Infield, by Matt Christopher. A mystery about sports, computers, and kids. Penny must find the reason for her friends' strange new behavior and sudden athletic talent.



Books for Your Children to Read by Themselves

Ages 4-6

Oink, by Arthur Geisert. While their mother is sleeping, her baby pigs sneak away on an adventure. They end up in trouble and must be rescued by their mother.



Ten Big Babies, by Robert Priest. A poem showing ten big babies falling asleep one by one. Counts from ten down to one.

HUMM-BZZT
WHIRRRR
CLICK-CLICK
BEEEEEP!...
SAME TO
YOU,
PAL...

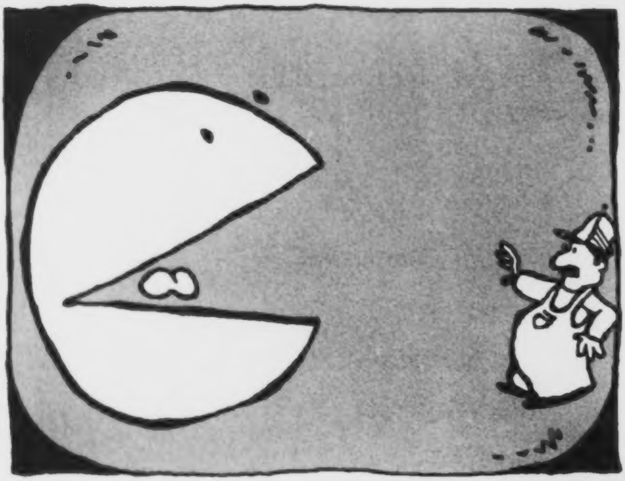
How to Talk to Your Computer, by Seymour Simon. Describes home computers and programming languages using LOGO and BASIC. Contains simple vocabulary and cartoonlike illustrations.

Ages 6-8

Calculator Fun, by David Adler. Easy-to-read instructions for using a calculator. Full of games, tricks, puzzles, and riddles that pertain to calculators.

Computers, by Karen Jacobsen (Childrens Press). Describes the basic principles of computer technology. Outlines the role of computers in society. Includes a dictionary of terms that gives definitions and pronunciations.

Computer Space Games, by Daniel Isaaman and Jenny Tyler. Outlines game programs to run on a microcomputer. Can be used with ZX81, ZX Spectrum., BBC, VIC 20, TRS-80, Pet, and Apple. Also gives ideas for changing and expanding the game programs.



Ages 8-10

Kids' Computer Capers, by Sandra Markle. Covers the history, daily use, and future of computers. Explains how to operate and program a computer. Includes activities and puzzles.

The Computer Nut, by Betsy Byars. Kate has an alien admirer. She and Willie team up and use their computer smarts to solve this mystery-romance.

A Beginner's Guide: LOGO Activities for the Computer, by Pat Ruane and Jane Hyman. An introduction to the programming language LOGO. Covers the basics and emphasizes graphics.

Magazines

Also ask your librarian for the following magazines:

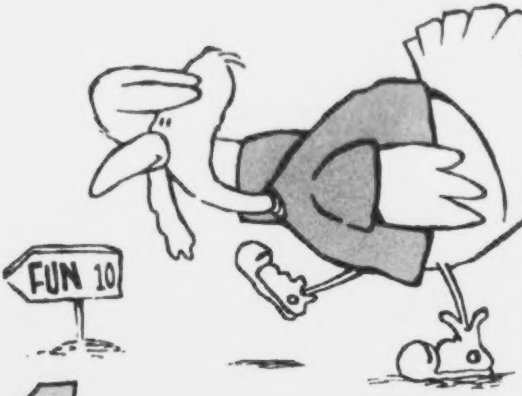
- *BYTE*
- *Creative Computing*
- *Cricket*
- *Digit Magazine*
- *Enter Magazine*
- *Family Computing*
- *Highlights for Children*
- *K Power*
- *PC Magazine*
- *Personal Computing*

* * *

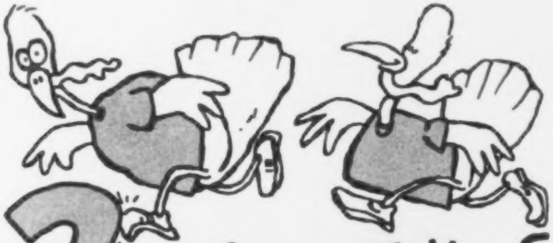
Read-along Stories

TURKEY TALLIES

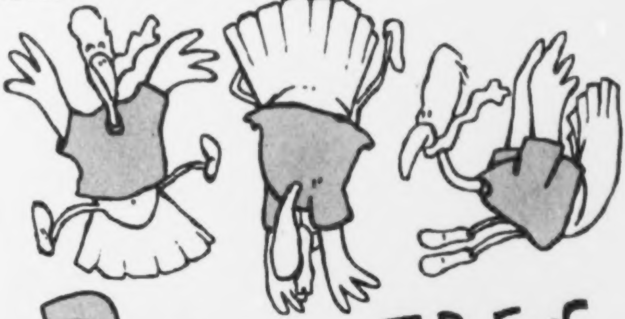
by LOU HAMILTON & DAVE COVERLY



1 BABY TURKEY LOOKING FOR SOME FUN.

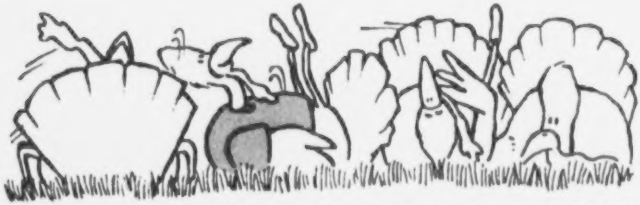


2 EAGER TURKEYS SAY, "C'MON, LET'S RUN!"

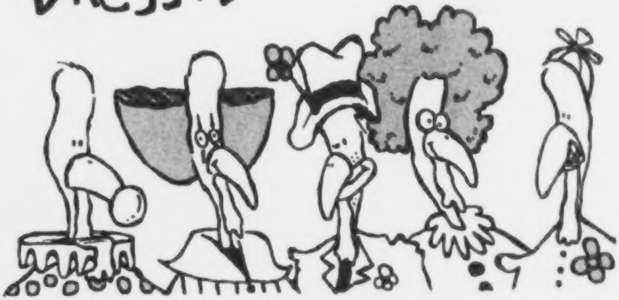


3 SKINNY TURKEYS JUMPING ALL AROUND.

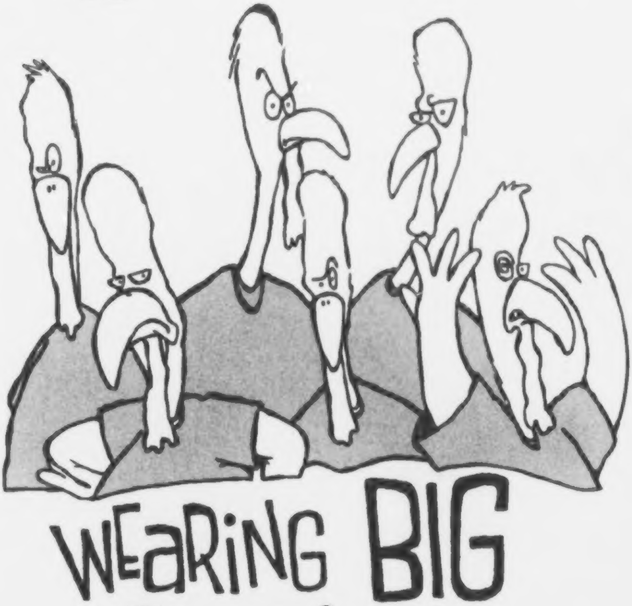
4 SILLY TURKEYS
ROLLING ON THE GROUND.



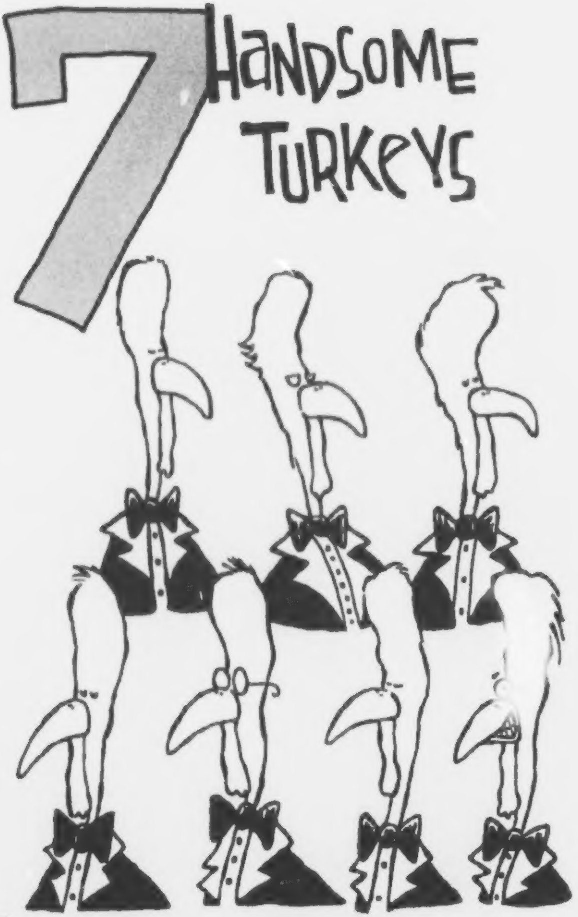
5 HAPPY TURKEYS
DRESSED LIKE CLOWNS.



6 Grouchy Turkeys



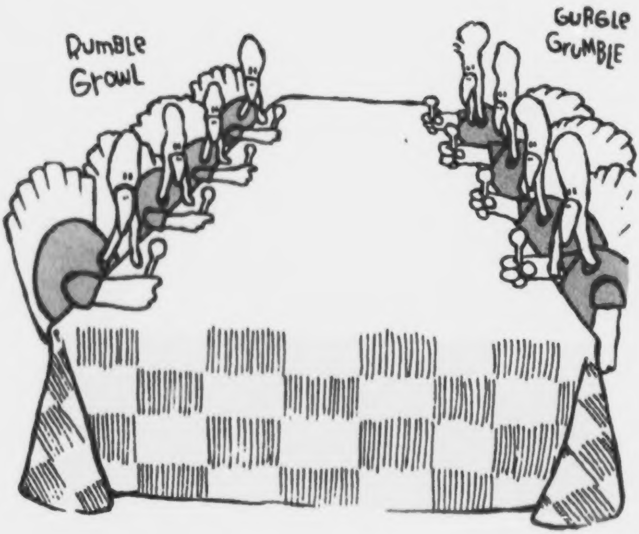
wearing BIG frowns.



7 HANDSOME TURKEYS

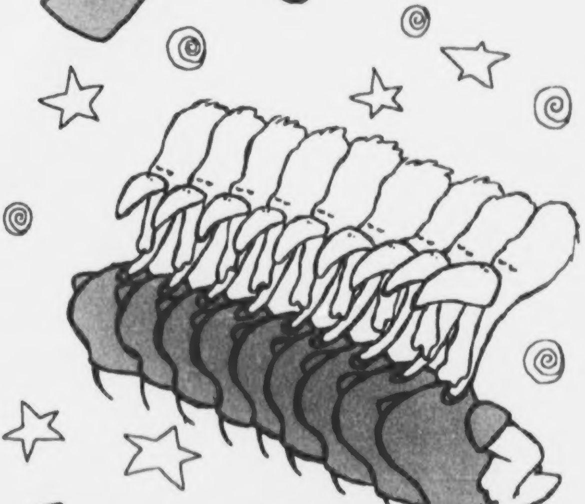
LOOKING SO FINE.

8 HUNGRY TURKEYS


RUMBLE
GROWL
GURGLE
GRUMBLE

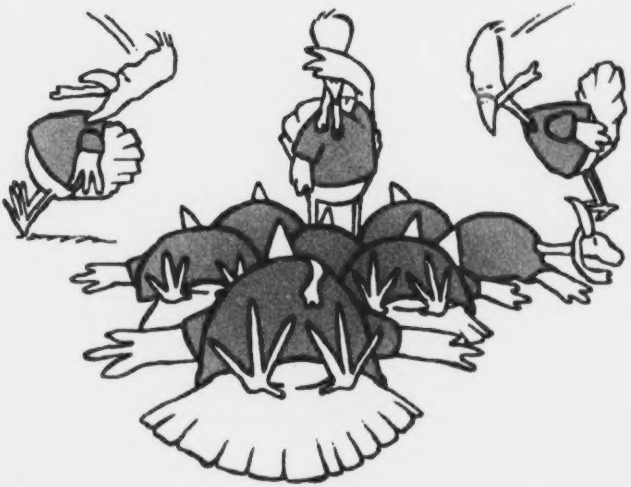
READY TO DINE.

9 PROUD TURKEYS

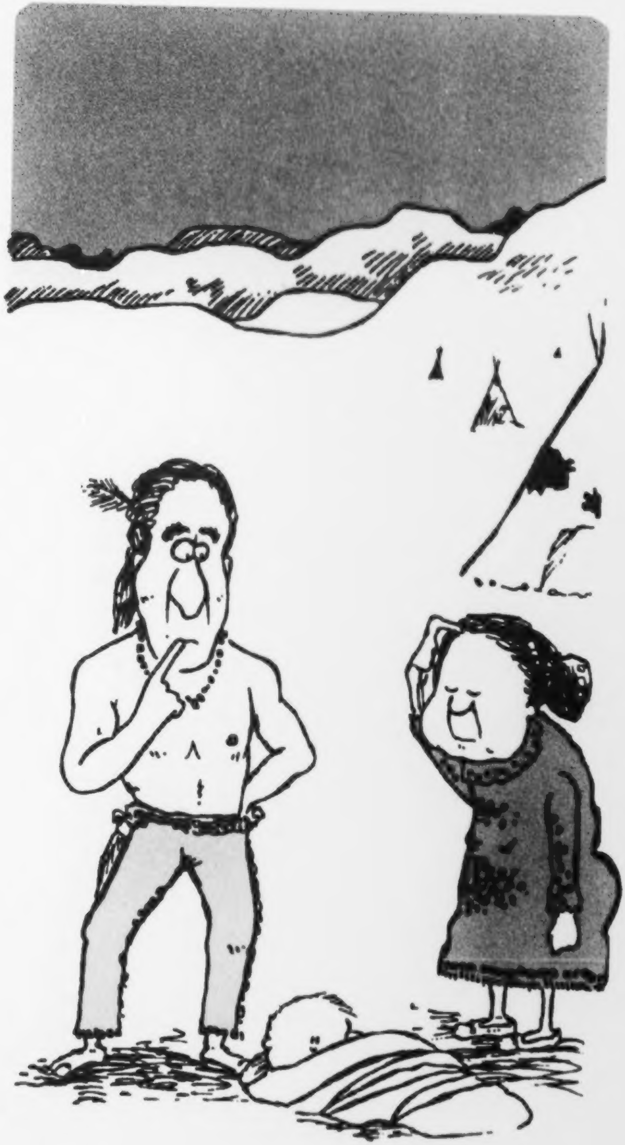


STRUTTING THEIR STUFF.

10 Tired Turkeys say,



“Enough is Enough!”



No-Name

by Constance Veatch Toney

Things to Do *before* Reading the Story

The Native Americans have many stories about how their people were given names. These names always came from nature or from some special quality that a person had. "Dances with Wolves" is an Indian name used in a famous movie. Think of an "Indian name" for yourself, a friend, or a relative. Base the name on a quality they have or on something from nature.

On the day she was born, no battle was fought. No great storm blew from the mountains. No strange bird flew on the warm winds. Nothing unusual happened at all.

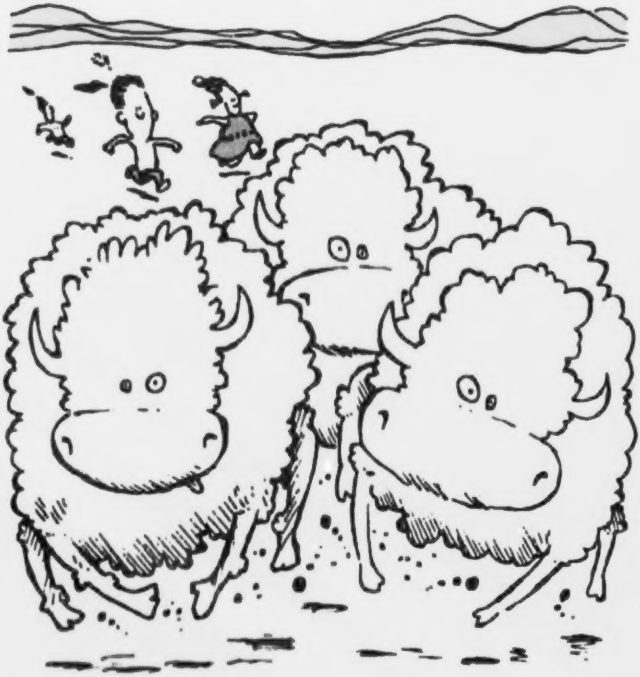
Silver Wolf shook his head sadly. "I can find no name for this girl child. What do you think the Great Spirit wants us to call our daughter?"

Wise Owl Woman thought for a moment. "Perhaps she must find her own name in a vision quest like the young warriors."

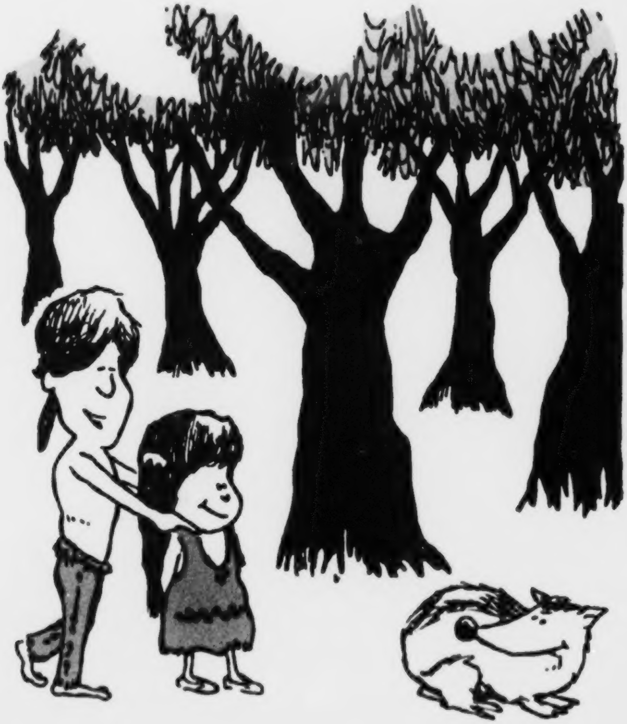
Silver Wolf nodded. "You must be right. This girl child shall be No-Name until the Great Spirit reveals the name chosen for her."

So the new baby girl born that day to the People was called No-Name.

The People lived on the prairie between the Snow Mountains and the Father-of-Waters. In the summer they followed the buffalo, and in the winter they made their village in a valley, which was warmed by the sun and watered by a small river.



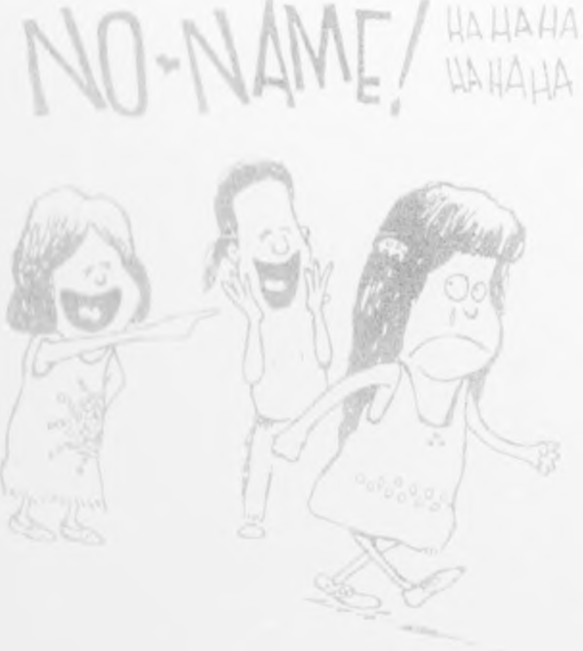
No-Name's parents loved her very much, and they taught her to honor the Great Spirit who watched over all things. Her brother, Gray Eagle, taught her the names and ways of each animal.



The village was like a big family for No-Name. She ate at any cook pot and slept in any lodge. The grownups were polite and never mentioned her lack of a proper name.

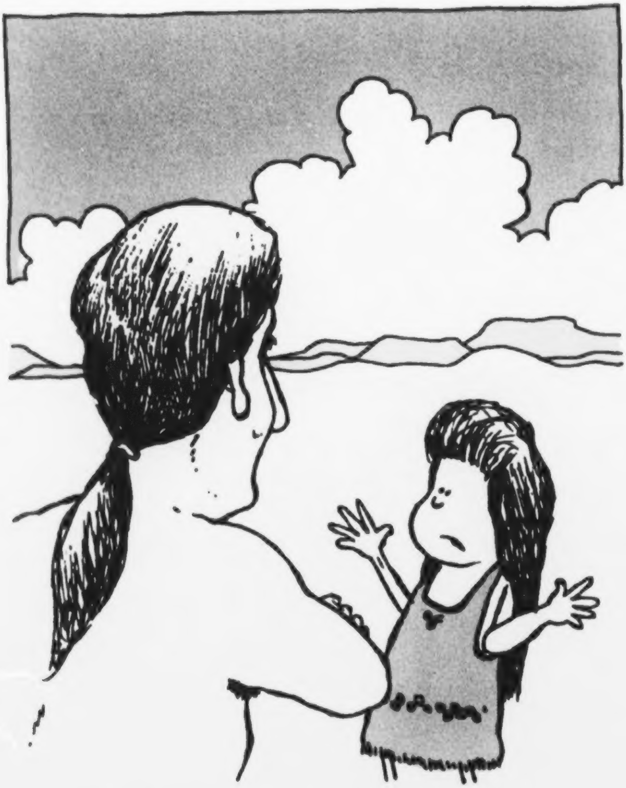
She was happy until the day some rude children teased her.

"No-Name has no name!" they chanted after her again and again.



No-Name ran home in tears. When Silver Wolf learned what had happened, he explained why she had no real name.

"Then I will find a name for myself," she cried.



"Yes, but you must do it correctly," her father said. "You must make your mind as clear as a mountain stream and pray for the Great Spirit to reveal your true name."

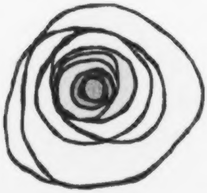
"How will I know it?" she asked.

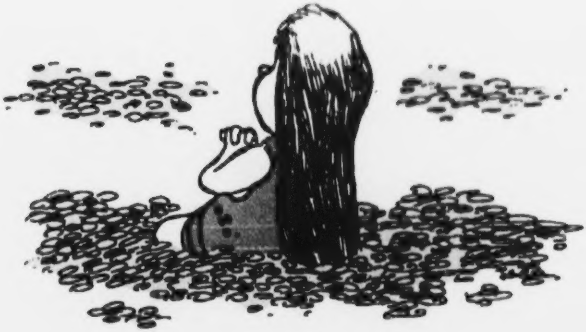
"Your heart will tell you," he said.

"Show me how I must do this," No-Name pleaded.

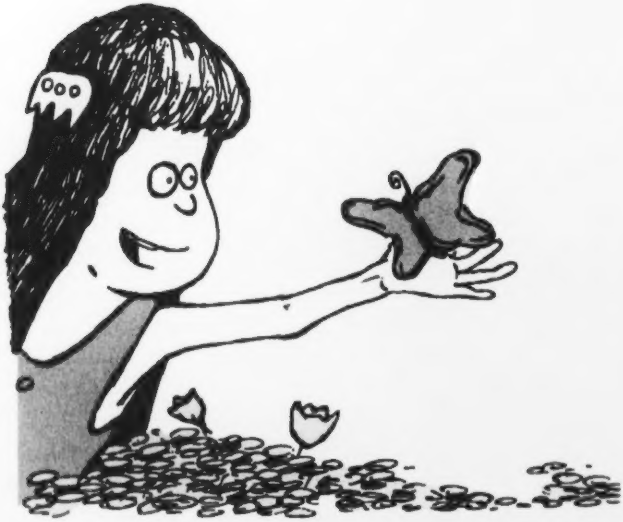
The next morning Silver Wolf took her out away from the village to a place where she could be alone.

All morning No-Name sat praying in the spring sunshine.





"Shall I be called Prairie Flower?" she wondered as the scent of wild flowers filled the morning air. But there already was another girl in the village by that name.



She watched butterflies dance among the flowers.

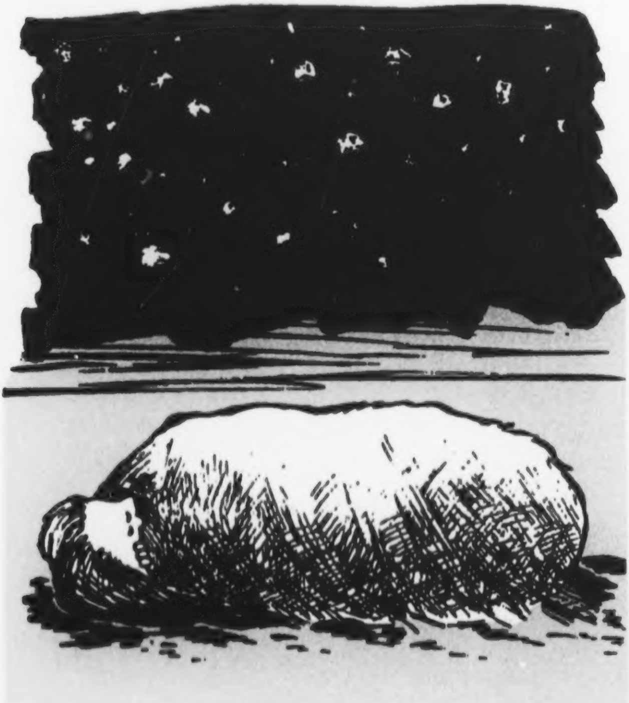
"Should I call myself Butterfly-on-the-Wind?" she asked the Great Spirit. There was only silence. All day she watched and prayed, but no name came to her.

Darkness gathered itself into gloomy shadows. No-Name pulled a buffalo robe close against the chill. She missed her family and the warm lodge fire. She had never before slept alone or away from the village. The night had sounds she didn't remember.

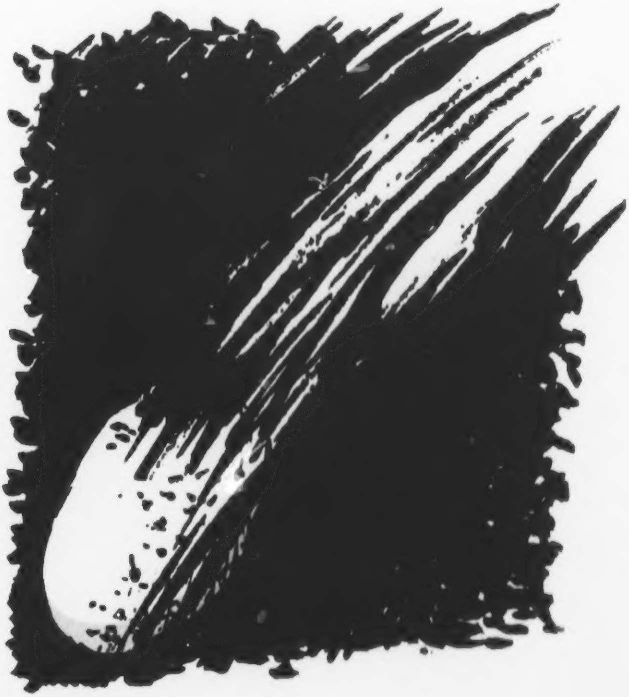
"Oh, Great Spirit, please send me a name very soon," she prayed. "I am afraid." She lay down and watched the stars burning their way across the sky.

They look like the campfires of the People, she said to herself. 'Thank you, Great Spirit, for building your fires all around me," she whispered into the darkness.

The night sounds turned to music in her ears, and the fear left her. No-Name wrapped herself in the buffalo robe and slept peacefully.



While she slept, the Great Spirit watched over her. When Coyote wandered too near, he heard a warning on the wind and came no closer. When Rattlesnake left his rocky den, he turned in another direction. Scorpion scuttled away into the night.

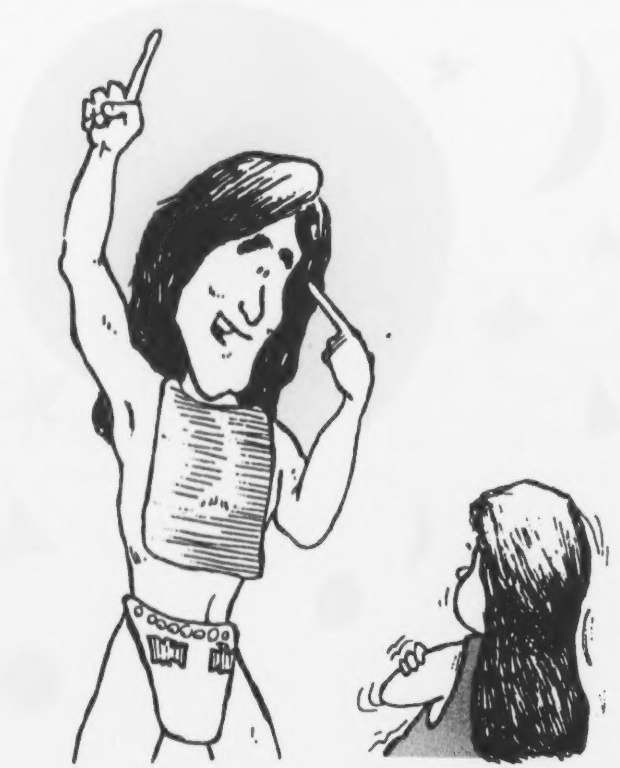


Then No-Name dreamed. Across her dream-sky blazed a flaming star. Where it fell to earth stood a golden warrior as beautiful as the sun.

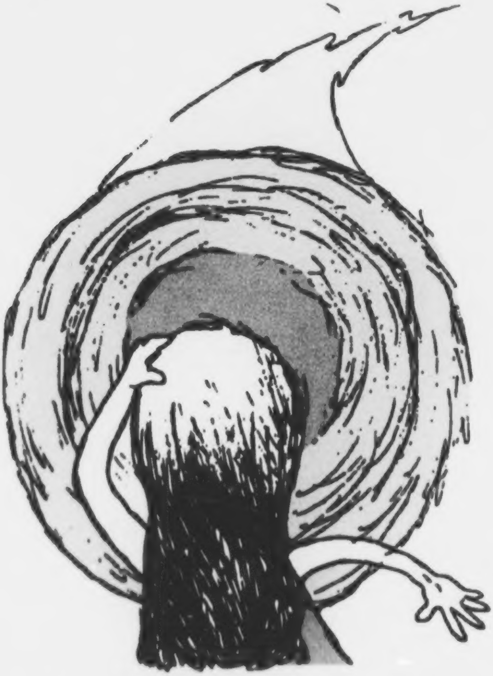
"Are you the Great Spirit?" she asked fearfully.

"No, little maiden, I am a messenger," the warrior said. "Because you trust and believe in the Great Spirit, you will be given a new name this very night. Awake and watch," he commanded.

No-Name awoke, trembling with fear. All about her were shadows, but the stars had moved. The sky glowed with the first gray light of day.



She stood and looked around. There was only the sound of dawn birds waking. Then to the east, No-Name saw a blazing light, but it was not the sun.



Straight toward her the fireball raced. She wanted to run, but something held her feet to the ground.

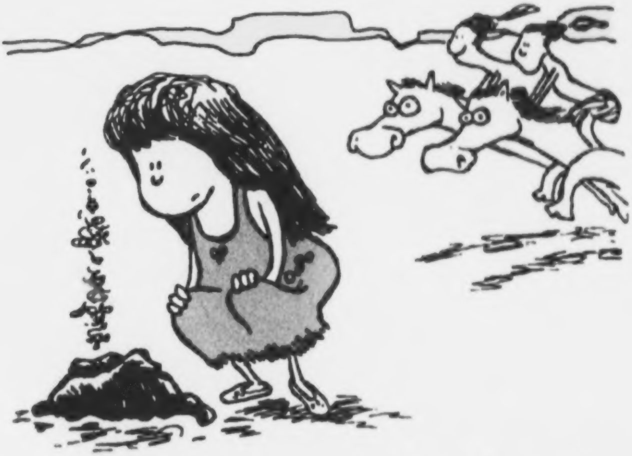
This is my dream, she thought.

Closer and closer the golden light burned. As it neared, its flame grew smaller until it was no more than a hissing spark. At last it fell, not far from where she stood.

"Thank you, Great Spirit!" No-Name cried. "Thank you for my proper name."

She ran to look. A black, twisted stone lay smoking at her feet. It was unlike any rock she had ever seen.

The People rode up on their horses. They stared at the strange stone.



"We saw the fire in the sky and feared for you," Silver Wolf said.

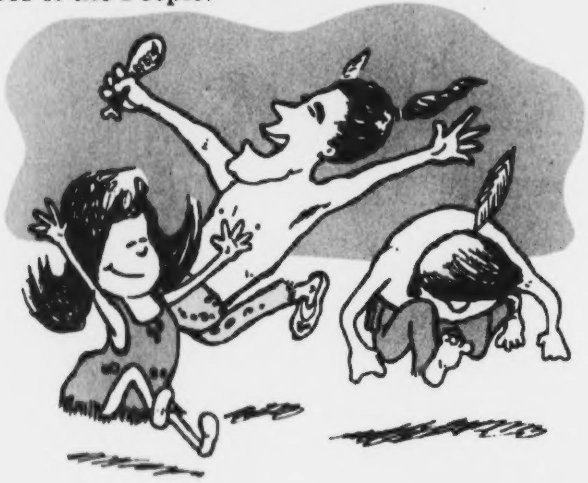
"It was my name thrown down by the Great Spirit," No-Name said with a shy smile.

Silver Wolf was pleased. "Tell us, my daughter, what name has the Great Spirit spoken to your heart?"

"From this day I shall be called Morning Star-Falling-from-the-Sky," she said proudly.

Her father smiled. "it is a good name. Today we will celebrate and give thanks."

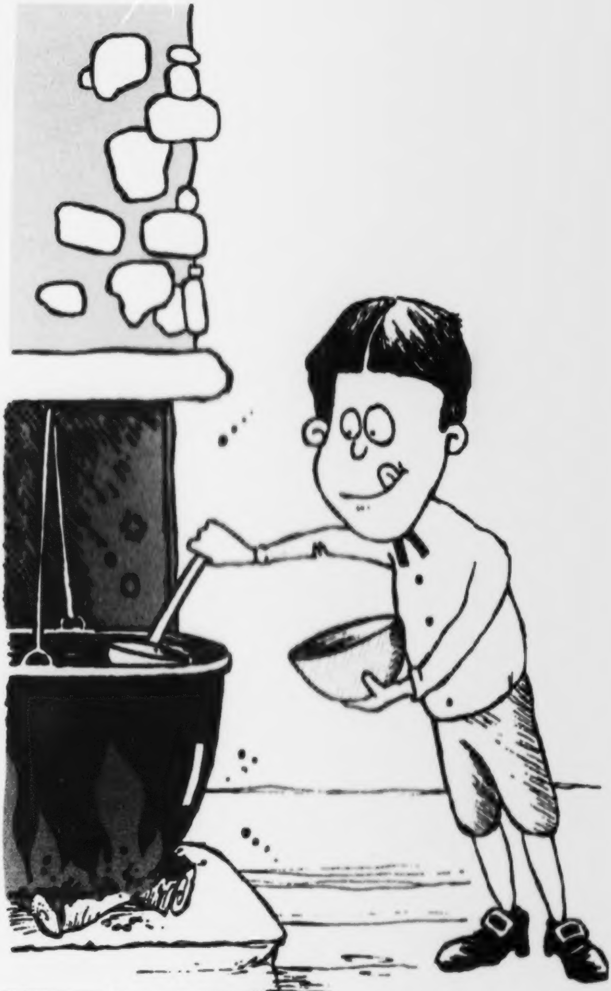
The People prepared a feast, and they honored the Great Spirit with their songs and dancing. Then Morning Star told the story of her dream and the golden warrior. Everyone listened in wonder. In time it became a legend sung around the campfires of the People.



As for the wonderful stone, Morning Star carried it in her medicine bag. It was her sign of the Great Spirit's love for a little girl who once had no name.

Things to Do *after* Reading the Story

No-Name was given the name "Morning Star" by the Great Spirit. Talk about your name. Why were you named what you were?



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Nathan's Secret Turkey

by Marilyn Kratz

Things to Do *before* Reading the Story

A friendship between a person and an animal can be just as close as a friendship between two people. As you read the story, think of the animals you have known as "friends," such as your pets. See if anything in the story matches how you have felt about your animal friends. If you have not had an animal friend, imagine what it would be like to have one.

"Mm! Mm! They smell good," Nathan said as he sniffed the cornmeal and molasses puddings on the long wooden table.

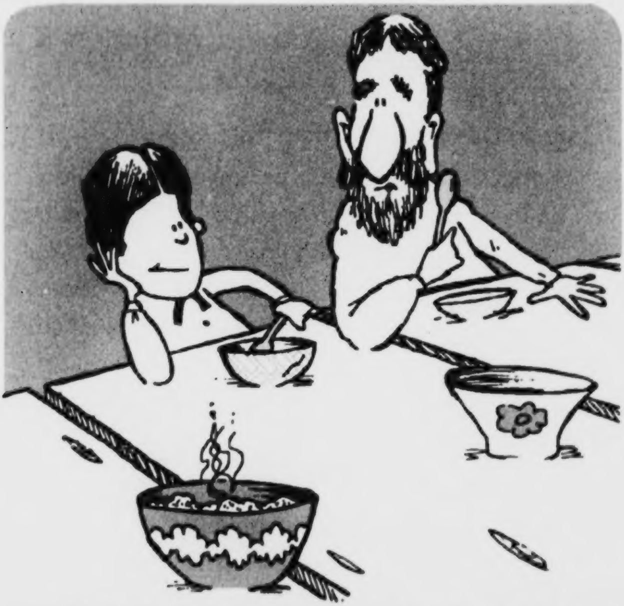
Mrs. Winster laughed. "Priscilla and I have been baking all morning," she said. "But you'll be having just plain deer stew for dinner. The pudding is for the Thanksgiving feast tomorrow."

Nathan filled his wooden bowl with stew from the big iron kettle hanging over the fireplace.

"Did you make corn bread and stewed pumpkin, too?" he asked.

"Yes, son," Mrs. Winster replied. "Our feast will be almost as fine as the first Thanksgiving."

"Please tell us about it again," begged Nathan and Priscilla.



Mr. Winster filled his bowl and sat on the log bench, beside his son.

"We had many reasons to be thankful," he said. "Our harvest was plentiful and we were glad to be living in freedom in this great new land. Although I was just a boy then, I remember the Indians who came to the feast. They had helped us through a difficult year."

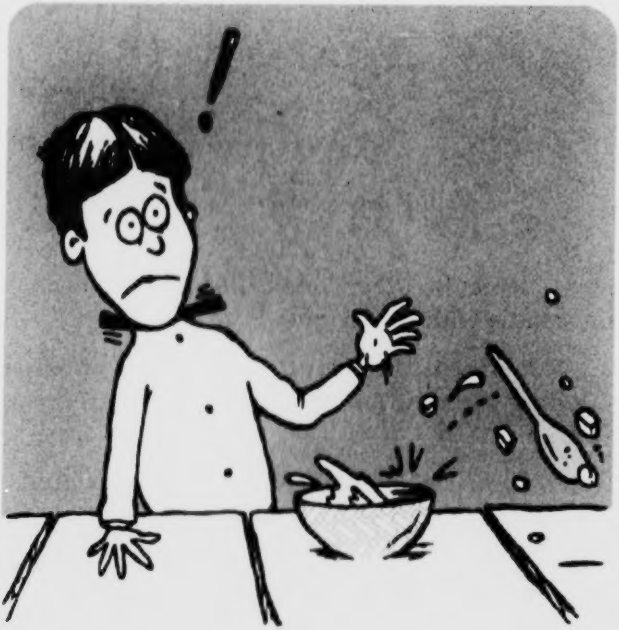
"Are they coming tomorrow?" Nathan asked hopefully.

"We haven't seen them for many months," Mr. Winster replied, "so we haven't invited them, but I wish we had."

"I remember the delicious food at that first Thanksgiving," Mrs. Winster said. "Wouldn't roast turkey taste good tomorrow?"

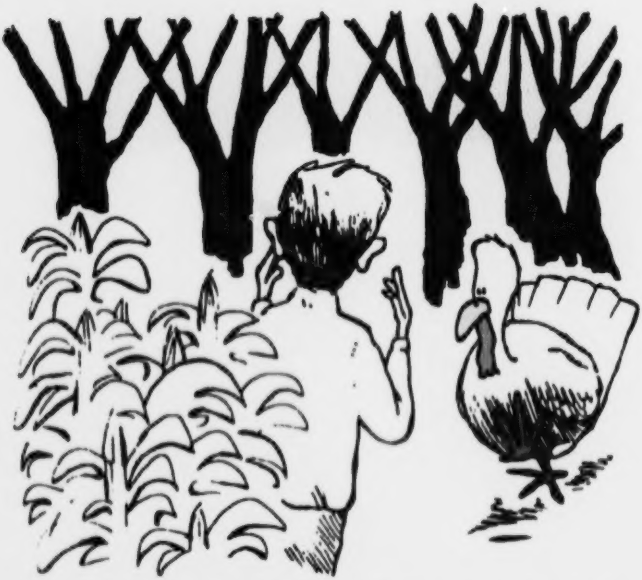
"I have seen a big tom turkey near our cornfield," said Mr. Winster. "I'll hunt for him this afternoon."

Nathan's wooden spoon clattered into his bowl.



"Please excuse me!" he blurted and dashed out the door of the house, leaving his parents and sister to stare after him.

Nathan ran all the way to the cornfield.



"Here, Strutter!" he called and made clucking sounds with his tongue.

A large turkey strutted out of the woods surrounding the cornfield and fearlessly approached Nathan.

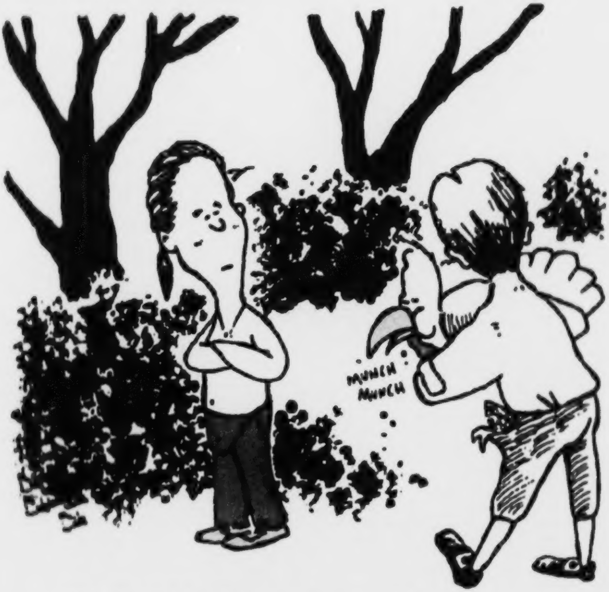
"I must hide you before Father goes hunting," Nathan said, offering the turkey an ear of corn. "You have been my secret friend ever since you were just a chick. I won't let anything happen to you!"

Nathan stuffed several ears of corn into his pockets and used another to coax Strutter into following him.

"Come on, Strutter. Hurry!"

The big bird was more interested in eating than walking. So Nathan carried him as they made their way deep into the woods until his arms began to ache from the weight of the turkey.

"We'll rest behind these bushes a minute," he decided. He pushed the bushes aside, then jumped back in alarm. There, before him, stood an Indian boy about his size.



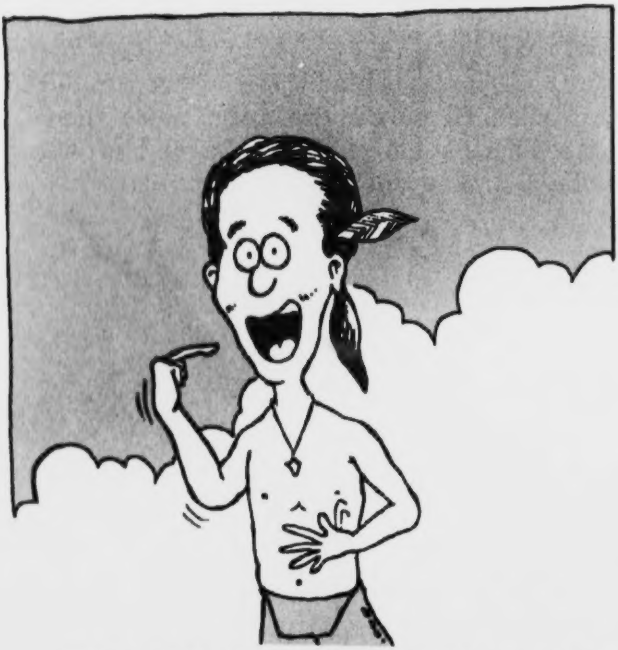
"Hello," Nathan stammered.

The Indian boy stared in silence.

"I...I have to hide my turkey." Nathan tried again. "I don't want anyone to eat him."

Nathan pointed to Strutter, then made eating motions.

The Indian boy's black eyes lit up. He grinned and made eating motions, too.

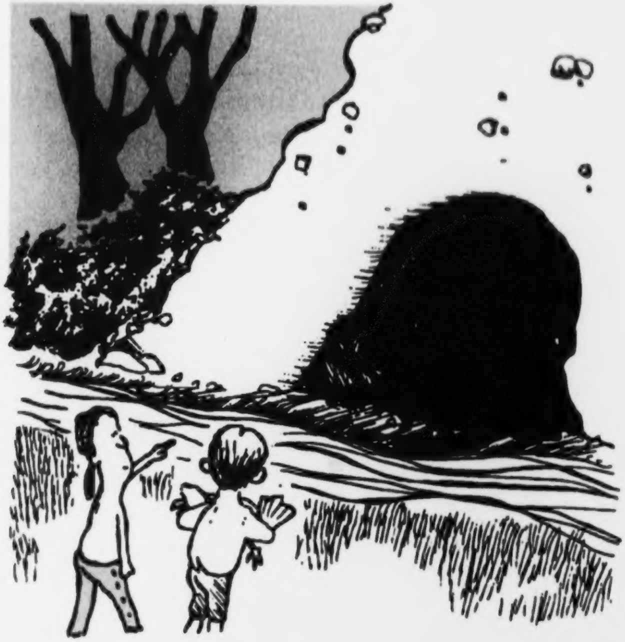


"Oh, no!" Nathan exclaimed. "I'm not inviting you to eat him! He's my friend!"

"Friend!" The Indian boy understood that word.

"Yes! Friend!" Nathan said, pointing to Strutter. "Hide—friend."

The boy looked thoughtfully from Nathan to Strutter. Then he motioned for Nathan to follow him. At last they came to a small cave along a stream.



"This will be perfect!" Nathan exclaimed. He tossed the corn he had brought into the cave. Strutter entered the cave eagerly. The Indian boy showed Nathan how to block the entrance with branches.

"Thank you," Nathan said. He hoped the boy understood. "I'll get Strutter after tomorrow. Now I'd better hurry home."

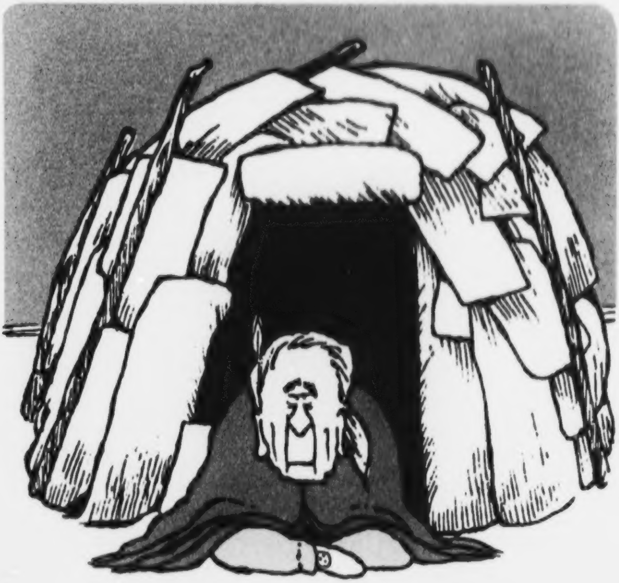
Nathan looked around.

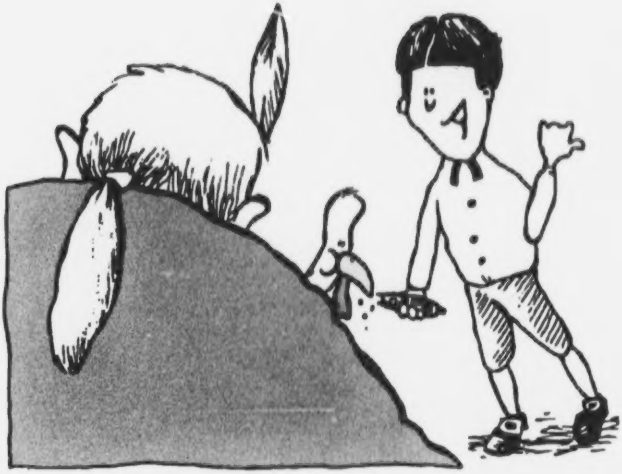
"But which way is home?" Nathan wondered, swallowing the lump which rose suddenly in his throat.

"I...I think I'm lost," he said, trying not to sound too concerned.

He and the Indian boy stared at each other for a minute. Suddenly, the Indian boy started off, motioning for Nathan to come. Not knowing what else to do, Nathan followed.

The boys moved a great distance along the stream until they came to a village of Indian houses. The Indian boy led Nathan to the largest wigwam. Sitting in front of it was an old man who looked at Nathan with kind, wise eyes.





"I am Tonkan," he said. "Welcome."

"I'm Nathan," said Nathan, relieved that Tonkan spoke English. "Do you know the way to my home? I'm a little lost."

The old man asked, "Do you live in the village of the harvest feast?"

"Harvest feast?" Nathan repeated. "Oh, you mean our Thanksgiving feast! Yes!"

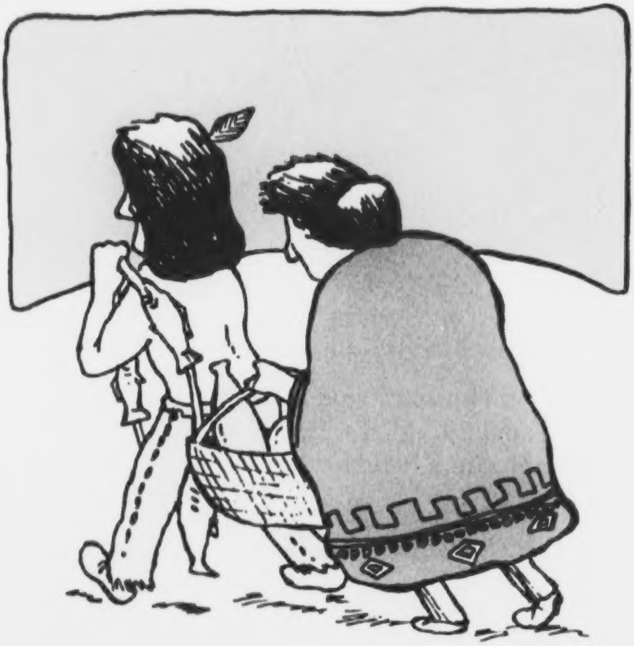
"I went to the harvest feast when I was young," Tonkan said. "I will help you find your way back."

"We're having another Thanks—I mean—harvest feast tomorrow," Nathan said. "Please stay for it."

Tonkan smiled.

"I will come. My friends will come." He pointed to the Indian boy. "Powhan will come."

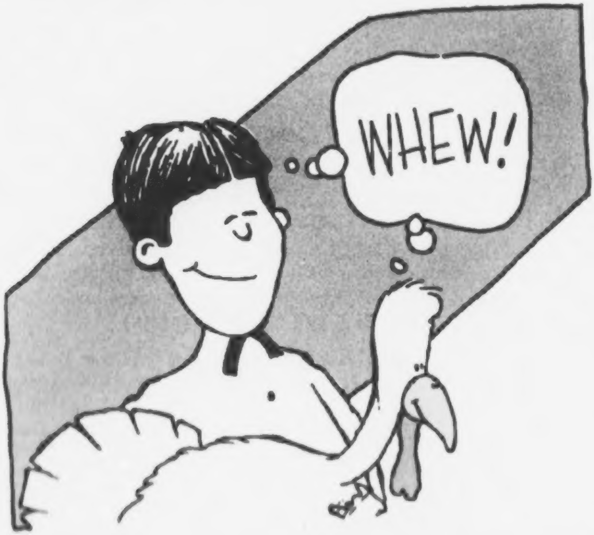
"That will be great!" Nathan said, jumping in excitement.



Tonkan spoke to a group of Indians standing nearby. At once, the women began packing baskets of berries, rice, and beans and pots of maple syrup. The men brought slabs of deer meat, strings of fresh fish, and several plump geese.

Nathan looked around happily.

"This is going to be the best Thanksgiving ever," he said. "I think I'll take Strutter back, too. With all this extra food, I won't have to worry about roast turkey."



Things to Do *after* Reading the Story

Nathan was very clever in finding a way to hide Strutter from his father. Think of other things Nathan could have done to keep his turkey friend from being eaten.

We hope you have had fun with these stories!

Books of Special Interest to Parents

How Can I Prepare My Young Child for Reading? by Paula C. Grinnell. Presents ideas to assist parents in preparing their children for reading. Focuses on children from birth through kindergarten. ($1.75)

You Can Help Your Young Child with Writing, by Marcia Baghban. Suggests methods parents can use to help develop their children's writing at home. Offers writing and reading activities. ($1.75)

Beginning Literacy and Your Child, by Steven B. Silvern and Linda R. Silvern. Recommends ways parents can participate in the development of their children's literacy. Provides activities for talking, reading, writing, and listening. ($1.75)

Helping Your Child Become a Reader, by Nancy L. Roser. Provides suggestions for parents to help them encourage their children to read. Offers several practical activities for parents. ($1.75)

Creating Readers and Writers, by Susan Mandel Glazer. Suggests that parents: (1) encourage the use of language; (2) build positive attitudes toward reading, writing, and speaking; and (3) demonstrate the purposes of literacy. Includes book suggestions classified by age groups. ($1.75)

You Can Encourage Your High School Student to Read, by Jamie Myers. Offers practical ideas parents can use to encourage their teenagers to read more. Shows how reading can serve adolescents' needs, and presents future needs that reading can fulfill. ($1.75)

Your Child's Vision Is Important by Caroline Beverstock. Discusses how vision affects school work, how different eye problems affect vision, and how to spot vision problems. Includes suggestions for dealing with vision difficulties. ($1.75)

101 Ideas to Help Your Child Learn to Read and Write, by Mary and Richard Behm. Ideas are presented to help parents use resources from around the home to promote literacy. The activities are educationally sound and fun for the parent and child to do together. ($6.50)

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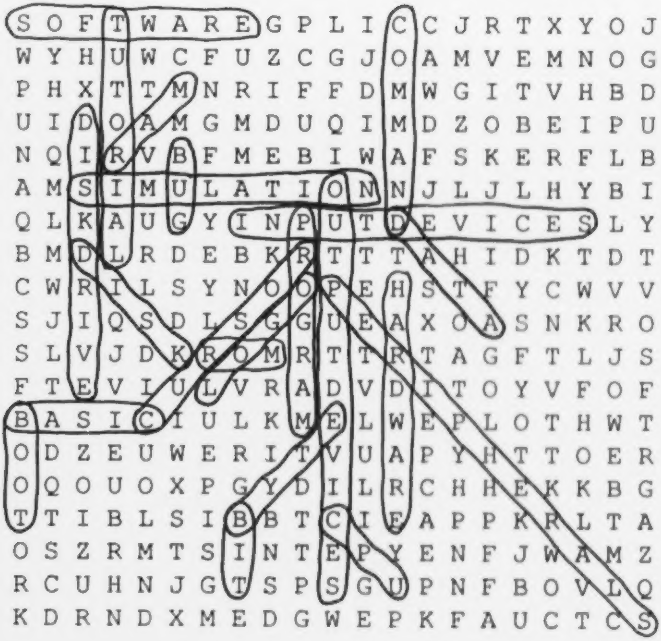

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Submissions Policy for Stories and Articles for Parents and Children Together

Stories for Children and Parents:

1. Make the story fun for children—your primary audience. The adult reading along will enjoy the story if the child does.
2. Make sure that your story is acceptable to parents. We do not want parents to reject the story because it is inappropriate for their children. Writing a story that is interesting to children and at the same time pleasing to parents is a big challenge.
3. Your story should be no longer than eight double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.
4. Correct grammar and syntax are important. For the most part we choose to model correct standard English.
5. Be careful about the vocabulary you use in your story. Rule out really long and difficult-to-pronounce words. Use "plain" English, when you can—words that have English roots rather than French or Latin ones.
6. Make your stories gender inclusive. Do not use sexist terminology or ideas. Our stories must be interesting to both boys and girls.
7. You may illustrate your own story, but they must be line drawings in pen and ink only. The drawings must be able to be scanned, so too much detail will not work.

Articles for Parents:

1. Articles should contain practical information and helpful strategies. Anecdotes and other experiences modeling useful learning methods are particularly desirable.
2. Your article should be no longer than four double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.

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Wise Owl Woman: Jennifer Whitaker
No–Name: Amiee Frye
Warrior: Rick Sakasitz

"Nathan's Secret Turkey"
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Nathan: Andy Cambridge
Mrs. Winster: Jennifer Whitaker
Priscilla: Aimee Frye
Mr. Winster: Rick Sakasitz
Tonkan: Rick Sakasitz

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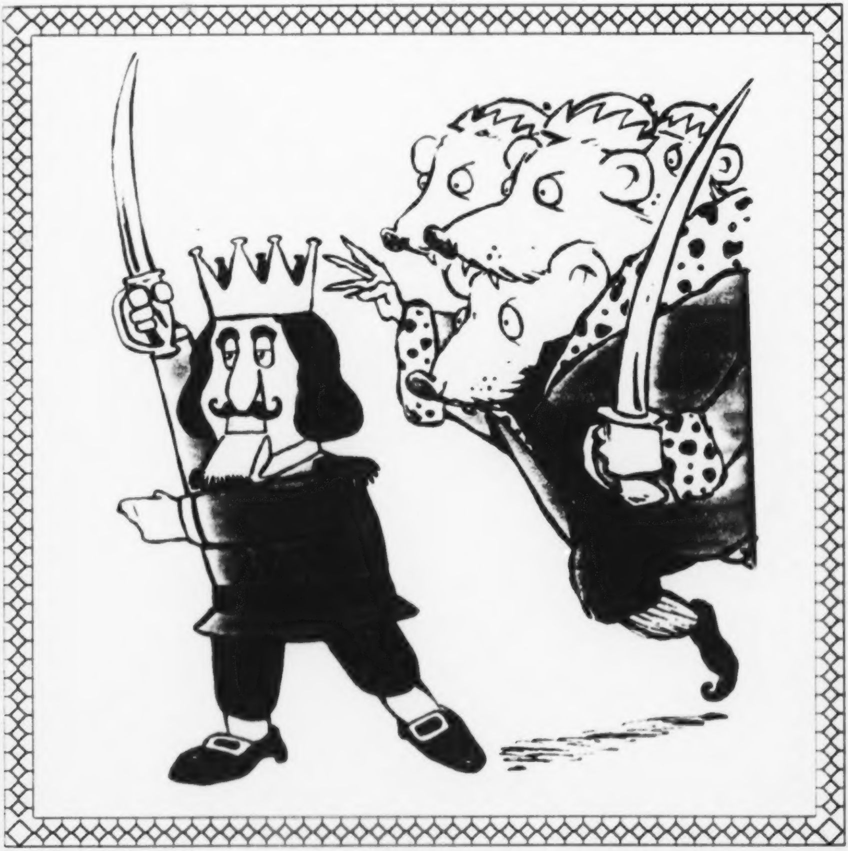
Creative Expression through Music and Dance



Read-along Stories:

Julie's Special Clarinet
The Nutcracker

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This booklet has a companion audio tape on "Creative Expression through Music and Dance." Occasionally there are directions on the tape that do not appear in the booklet or headings in the booklet that aren't spoken on the tape.

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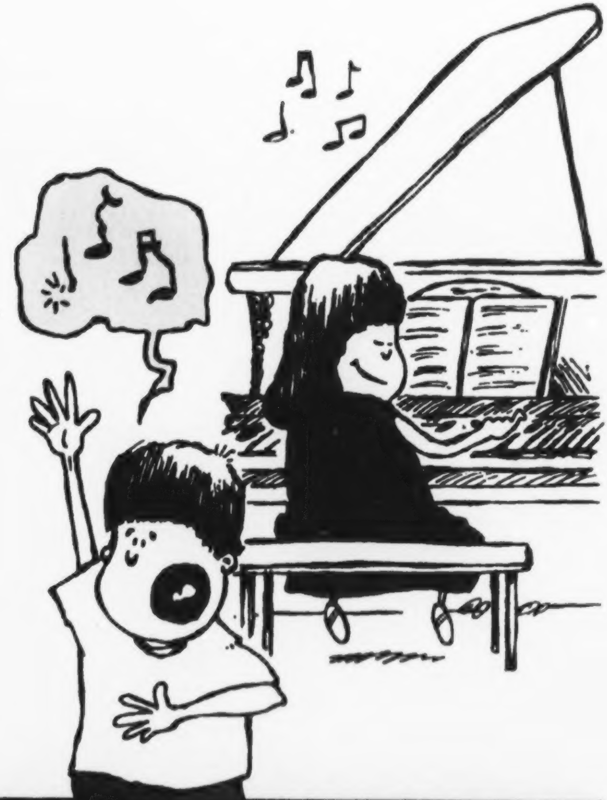

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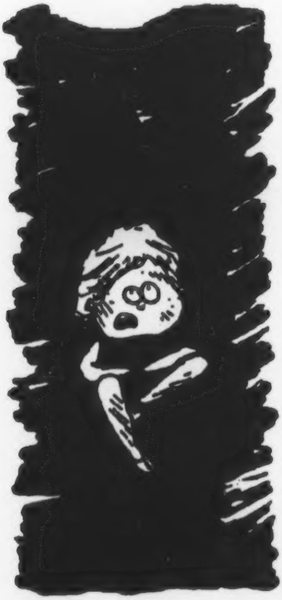
Getting Started

Welcome to this month's issue of *Parents and Children Together.* We focus on music and dance in this issue, and discuss the benefits children receive from participating in them. On side B of the tape (and in the second half of the booklet) we have two read-along stories. We encourage you to listen to these stories and to read them with your children, so that they may participate in the excitement of story reading. Of course, your child can also listen to the stories alone, if you wish.

TAP TAP
TAP TAP
TAP

Music and Dance Are Part of Education and Life

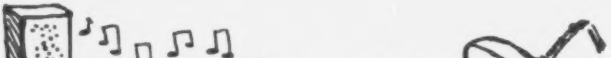


A song may have saved the life of Jessica McClure. She's the little girl from Texas who made national headlines when she fell down an old well and was trapped there for almost three days. For all that time the little girl was wedged in a narrow, cold, abandoned well.

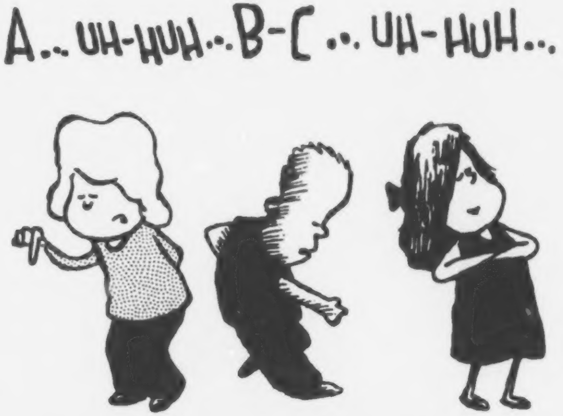
As workers tried frantically to rescue her, they heard Jessica singing to herself, over and over again, as though she was singing a chant for life. Someone had taught her a song—a song that may have saved her life. No one thought that her bruised, hungry body could withstand the underground cold. They were afraid that she would die of hypothermia. But she didn't. She kept singing that song.

Sometimes we think of music as merely entertainment, but it is much more than that. Music operates like an instinctual language. Basic rhythms calm or excite our nervous systems. That's why we can't help tapping our feet to rap music and to marches. Certain sounds and certain tempos can make us feel sad or happy. Music captures our attention and enables us to recall long-forgotten memories.

Film makers and TV producers are aware of the power of music over our bodies and minds, and use it to elicit moods and feelings. Doctors and dentists often use music to help their patients relax, and producers of sports events use it to increase the excitement of games. In a similar way, teachers and parents can use music for learning. If



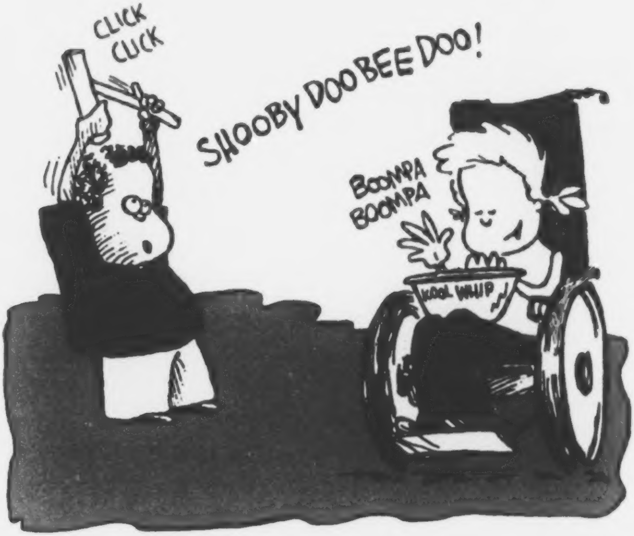
children's nervous systems are keyed up, some teachers will play march music while students march around the room for a few minutes to ease some of their tension. Then they will play soft relaxing music to help children concentrate on their desk work. Parents, of course, have always sung lullabies to calm their children, especially when they want them to go to sleep.


A... UH-HUH... B-C... UH-HUH...

Teachers and parents have found that music makes it easier to remember things, such as the alphabet through the "ABC song." Chants, songs, and rap music are used to remember everything from multiplication tables to state capitals. Dancing and hand-clapping can be used in a similar fashion. Young children can use their bodies to form the shapes of the alphabet so as to learn and to remember them. Older children can use choral music to improve pronunciation and to remember poetry.

Art and Fun

We don't want to give the impression that you need to use music and dance primarily to improve memory or to calm the nervous system for study in school. Music and dance are related art forms that help people express their emotions and develop a sense of beauty or power, as well as their natural abilities. You can help your children to explore the arts by buying, or helping them make, simple instruments, such as hand drums, triangles, rhythm sticks, or tambourines—anything they can shake, bang, or clink. Children can also use a tape recorder, which will give them a chance to play tapes or to record their own songs, thus improving their sense of music and dance.



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All you have to do is watch young children dancing or imitating a musician to know that they have a great time using music to stimulate their imaginations. You can use this sense of fun and involvement to help them become curious about the musical expression of moods, sounds in nature (a storm, for example), and how different instruments can represent body movements (the flute for skipping, the trombone for marching, the violin for swaying, and so on). You might ask your children to assign a color to certain instruments as they listen to them in a band or orchestra. The guitar might sound green, the trumpet red, and the bass brown. It doesn't matter how they associate colors with the music they hear. You are simply trying to help them appreciate music through all their senses, not just hearing. These exercises will help open their imaginations to different ways of making music and dance a part of their lives.

Have you ever thought of using song books as read-along books? Many song books for children are beautifully illustrated and make wonderful read-along, sing-along books. Some have accompanying tape recordings so you and your child can learn the songs together—providing that you know the songs and are able to guide the singing. By using tape recorders, children can do their own read-sing-dance-along activities at a very early age.

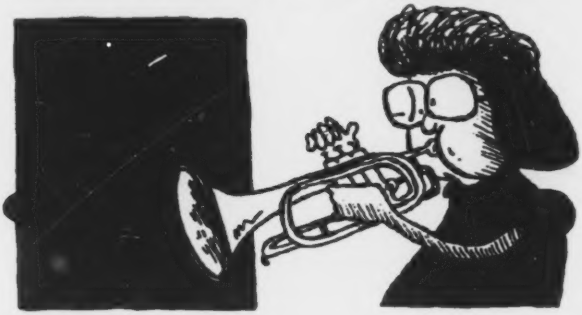
Singing and dancing are a part of early childhood activities in many families—rocking with "Rock-a-Bye-Baby," playing "Patty-Cake," skipping to "Ring-around-the-Rosie." These joyful experiences shouldn't stop when a child goes to school. Through such early music and dance games, you can set the stage for long-term family fun and learning. Song books, charades, making up new verses to old songs, interpreting music through dance, selecting music for cleaning the house or eating dinner, may open your children's senses and help them to learn and to appreciate life through music and dance.

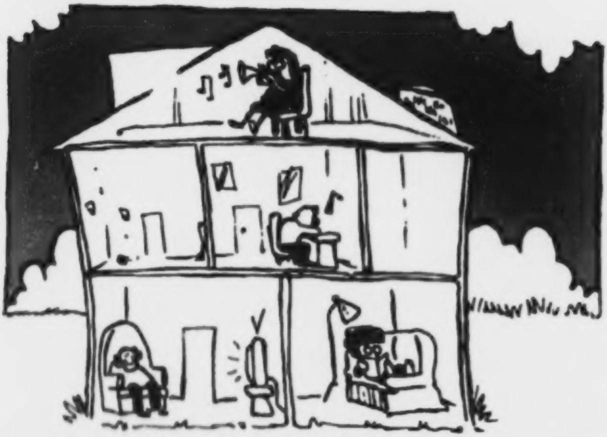
Questions about Music and Dance

Often times parents are interested in involving their children in music activities or dance, but have questions about it. We would like to answer some of those questions.

Our daughter is in the elementary school band and must practice at home. Her practicing can sometimes be annoying, and is just one more thing we have to work into our schedule. Do you have any suggestions for making this a pleasant experience for all of us?

When your daughter learns a musical instrument, she must "study" or practice that instrument just as she studies math, social studies, or other subjects in school. But just as others in the family must understand that her practicing is important, so too, your daughter needs to respect their right for quiet during certain times.





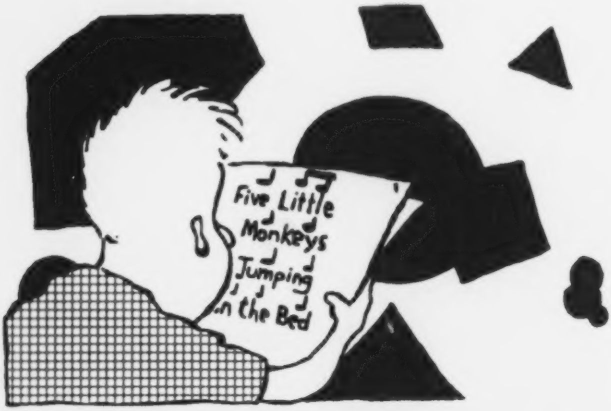
If possible, find a quiet place for your daughter to practice. A room away from others allows her to practice without interruptions, and she does not disturb those who are trying to concentrate on their homework or other tasks. If the sound of her practicing cannot be isolated, it might be good to select a time when other members of your family are away or doing things that do not require a great deal of concentration.

Encourage your daughter to play pieces she is good at, as well as ones on which she needs more practice. This will make everyone feel better and will give you opportunities to praise your daughter's efforts. She will need your daily encouragement for studying music, just as she needs it for reading and writing. Playing a variety of music can help motivate practice. You may want to ask her teacher to recommend sheet music that will be fun for her to play, as well as the pieces she must practice for school performances.

When your daughter has mastered a piece of music, have her play it for the family. Let everyone enjoy the results of her practicing.

I heard a teacher say that music helps children learn to read. What does music have to do with reading?

Music and reading go together because singing and reading are celebrations of language. Children love to play with the words and rhythms in songs and find reflections of those rhythms and melodies in print.

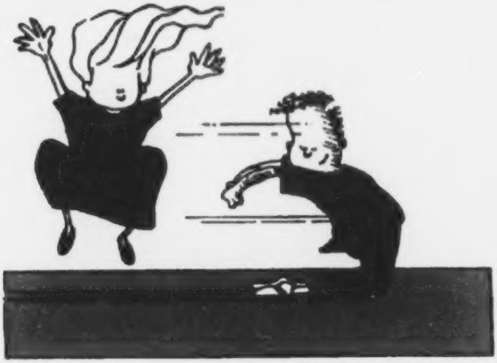


Music is a natural extension of children's language and experience. Children sing songs that they hear, and are eager to see the words in print. The easiest language for them to read is that with which they are familiar and comfortable. In class they show excitement when they see the songs they know in print. Children develop a sight vocabulary and a deeper understanding of meaning as they point to words or phrases while singing along.

Songs engage children in activities that help comprehension. Using movement with songs is a wonderful way to extend comprehension. When children do the movements to "I'm a Little Tea Pot" we know that they truly have comprehended that song. Acting out a song builds bridges between reading and movement, and reading and drama. Because of their natural affinity for music, children are willing to act out songs over and over again, thus reinforcing the language and ideas in the lyrics.

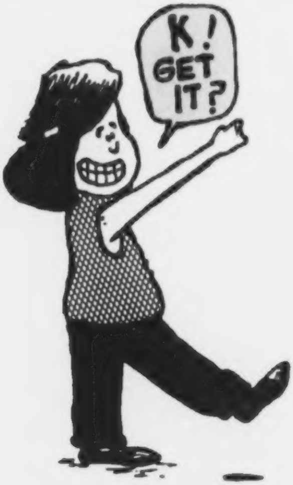
Why is my kindergarten son dancing in class? Aren't there more important things they should be learning?

The kind of dance that most young children do in early childhood classrooms is called "creative dance" or "creative movement." Through such creative movement to music, children explore sound and the abilities of their bodies. Their movements reflect what the music means or feels like to them. And this is one of the functions of dance—to express feelings and to interpret ideas, which are also functions of reading and writing.



Children need the opportunity to explore movement possibilities and to pay attention to what those movements feel like. Answering questions such as "How can you get higher when you jump?" or "How can you fall down without crashing to the floor?" or "How can you move your body to make it look like you are blowing in the wind?" can help your child's physical and mental development.

Dance helps young children learn about their bodies, space, time, energy, and the relationships among them. Children realize that they can make shapes and letters with their bodies; they can move with strength and lightness just as the wind moves. They learn that the movements they use to walk across a room, to reach for a toy, or to turn and bend to pick something up are also used in dancing. Children do not consider this dancing, but dance is made up of the same movements—walking, reaching, bending, turning.



The important link between "creative movement" and learning is a major reason why early childhood classrooms provide concrete experiences with music and dance. Dance is certainly not the only kind of movement young children want or need. But its emphasis on sound, rhythm, and meaning can help children understand themselves and their world.

> **If you have questions, please write to us and we will try to answer them for you. You may find your question in another issue of *Parents and Children Together.***

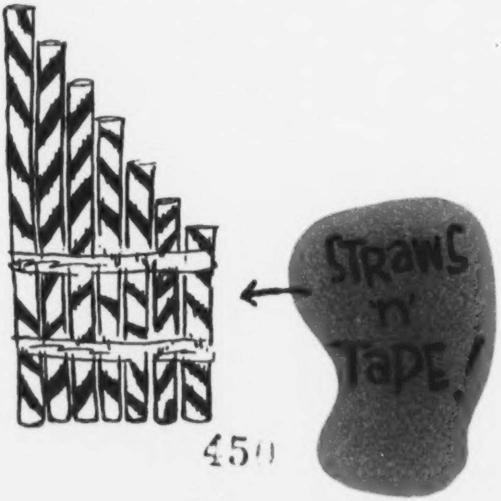
Write to:
Editor, *Parents and Children Together*
Indiana University
2805 E. 10th Street, Suite 150
Bloomington, IN 47408-2698

Activities for Song and Movement

As parents, we are looking for activities that will benefit our children. Here are some music and dance activities you can enjoy with your children.

Straw Flute

- Make a flute using plastic straws and masking tape. Arrange six or seven straws in a single row. Place the tape across the outside of the straws to attach them together. Begin at the left end, skip the first straw and then cut off each straw so that it is 1/4" shorter than the one which preceded it. Gently blow across the top of the straws to create sound.


STRAWS 'n' TAPE!

SSSHHH
LIBRARY

Audio-Visual Fun

- Browse through the audio-visual department of your library for videos of operas, ballets, and musicals to watch with your child. Also, look for instructional videos on music or dance. Tapes, records, and CDs of all types of music are usually available to borrow. Your local library may have a special area with equipment for your listening pleasure.

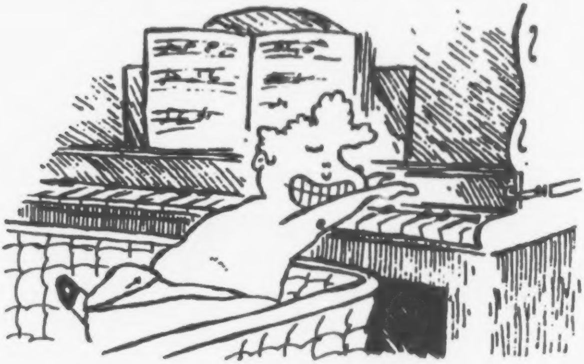
Jump, Twist, and Shout

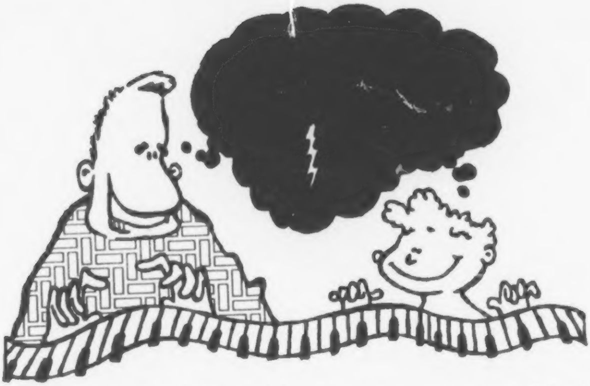
- If you are not comfortable dancing with your child, try exercising to music. Jumping jacks, running or jumping in place, twists, and stretching work well.

Sharing Music Can Enhance Parent-Child Relationships

Sarah Stevens-Estabrook, an elementary-school music teacher at University School in Bloomington, Indiana, shared some of her musical memories.

My parents love music, and during my childhood they did everything possible to encourage me to love it, also. When I was six months old, my mother would keep me happy by pushing my playpen up to the piano and allowing me to pound on it. (I encourage my two-year-old to do the same thing now, and my husband tied the lid of the piano back with a strap so it wouldn't fall on his little fingers. If you have a piano with a drop lid, this is very important.)





As I got a little older, my parents would play the piano with me—sometimes my mother would play simple songs and I would pound on the keys as she played. Other times, my father and I would create "compositions." We would pick a topic such as "The Thunderstorm," and "paint" it with music. I would pound on the low notes for the thunder, he would attack the high notes for the lightning, and we would add little tinkling sounds for the rain.

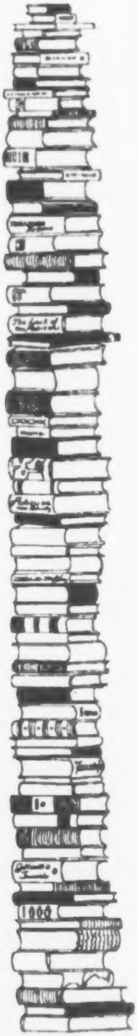
As we experimented, our compositions grew more elaborate and diverse. Instead of doing "The Thunderstorm," or "The Ocean," we began to tell stories along with the music, and he started to teach me to play the piano "by ear," as his mother had taught him. All of this was so much fun that I loved to spend time with my father. Everything we did was exciting, because while he was teaching me about music and storytelling, he was also giving me the confidence to approach musical and academic tasks with flexibility and creativity. In addition, he was building a relationship with me that is still strong and close today.

Now that I am an elementary music teacher, I use many of the ideas I learned from him when I was small. As a piano teacher, I encourage children to tell musical stories, improvise, play by ear, and compose, as well as to read music. As a general music teacher in the public schools, I do a great deal with drama, improvisation, and composition. Children who are encouraged to improvise musically develop a sense of confidence in their own ability to think and to create that carries over into other areas.

You might have a good time joining your children in some musical experimentation, either on the piano, as my father did with me (you don't have to be able to play—just experiment with the sounds) or by storytelling with sound effects made on pots and pans or other household objects. Try making up a holiday story, and adding special sounds—on any instrument, object, or just with your voices. ("Santa's sleigh has landed on the roof.

Do you hear the reindeer walking around up there? What does the snow sound like as it drifts down? Do you hear the sleigh bells? What kind of scraping sound does Santa make when he slides down the chimney? Does he remember his bag of toys, or does he have to go back up the chimney to get them? How does that sound? What do the reindeer say?")

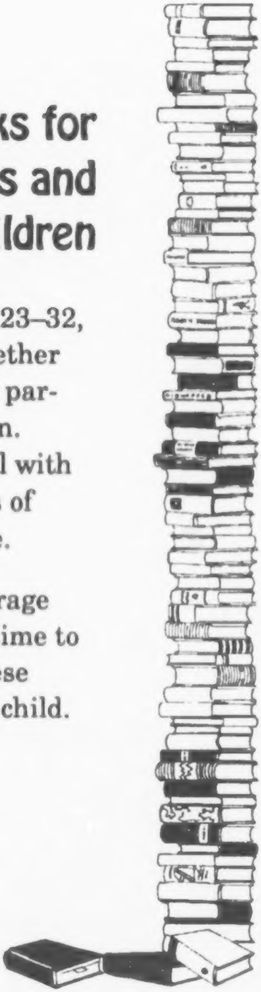
Remember, there's no right or wrong sound or event in the story. Just try things, laugh, listen to what your child is saying, and share a good time; then you'll be building language and musical skills as well as a strong parent-child relationship.



Books for Parents and Children

On pages 23–32, we have put together lists of books for parents and children. These books deal with different aspects of music and dance.

We encourage you to take the time to read a few of these books with your child.



At the beginning of this issue, we mentioned that Side B of the audio tape contains two stories that are designed to be read-along stories. You may want to take some time to look ahead at these stories before you read along with your child. It is also important to talk about the story ahead of time.

Before reading the story, talk about the title or things that might happen in the story. Then—after the story is finished—talk about it again. By the way, if in the middle of the story something funny or exciting or interesting happens, it's O.K. for you to stop the tape and discuss the event, or for you to ask your child questions such as "What instrument would you like to play?" or "Would you like a nutcracker as a gift?" and then follow it up with a why or why not. These questions make your conversation about the story more natural and valuable.

When you and your child are ready, turn the tape to Side B and listen to the stories as you read along together, or you may read the stories aloud while your child reads along in the booklet.

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Books for Parents

Creative Movement for the Developing Child: A Nursery School Handbook for Non-Musicians, by Clare Cherry. Recommends activities for the development of walking, running, jumping, leaping, skipping, throwing and catching movements. Also covers posture, percussion instruments, rhythmic activities, and auditory perception games.

Growing Up with Music, by Hilda Hunter. Shows parents how to make music a part of their child's life. Provides tips on musical play, games, hobbies, trips, and concerts. Discusses music enjoyment and building a home music library.

The History of Dance, by Mary Clarke and Clement Crisp. Presents the history of dance from a variety of cultures spanning more than 2,000 years. Describes different types of dance: primitive, ancient, religious, European, Eastern, social, and modern. Elaborates on the history and development of ballet.

The Music of Man, by Yehudi Menuhin and Curtis W. Davis. Explores the evolution of music from its early beginnings to the present. Outlines the social and historical development of music and its influence on humankind.

Books to Read Together

Ages 4-6

Dance Away, by George Shannon (Mulberry Books). Rabbit loves to dance. He dances morning, noon, and night. Rabbit not only dances for fun, but helps his friends by showing them how to dance away from a hungry fox.

Obadiah Coffee and the Music Contest, by Valerie Poole (HarperCollins). Obadiah plays like no one else, until someone puts a banana in his saxophone at the Boxwood Garden music contest. Obadiah must discover the culprit and get the contest back in full swing.

What a Noise: A Fun Book of Sounds, by Neil Morris (Carolrhoda). Sam discovers many different sounds while trying to keep things quiet around the house so his sister can take her nap. The peace and quiet ends when Sam can't stop sneezing.

Ages 6-8

Madame Nightingale Will Sing Tonight, by James Mayhew (Bantam Books). The animals in the woods decide to perform an opera. Trouble arises when Madame Nightingale develops stage fright. Includes introductory information about opera.

Make Your Own Musical Instruments, by Margaret McLean (Lerner). Gives instructions for making various kinds of instruments. Includes tambourine, maracas, castanets, drums, xylophone, bells, zither, and wind instruments. Covers music notation and rhythms.

I Love to Dance, by Gerry Zeck (Carolrhoda). Tony studies ballet and contemporary dance, and performs in theater groups. Describes Tony's life and his love of dancing.

Ages 8-10

Mozart Tonight, by Julie Downing (Bradbury Press). Follows Mozart as he remembers his life from childhood to the performance of his opera, *Don Giovanni.* Also includes background information about Mozart from the author's research.

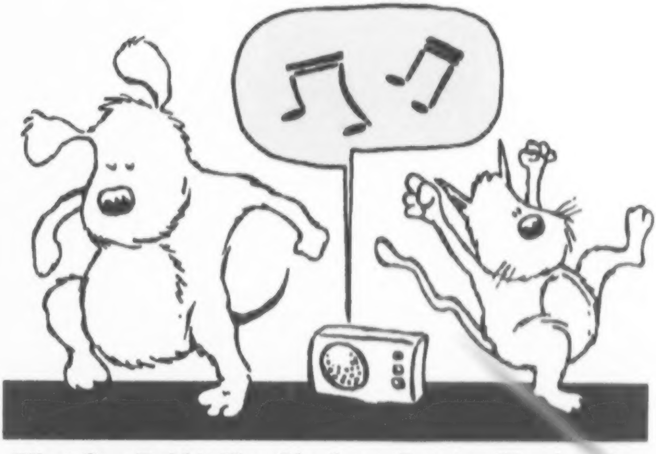
A Pianist's Debut, by Barbara Beirne (Carolrhoda). Eleven-year-old Leah attends The Juilliard School of Music in New York where she studies to become a concert pianist. Shares her love of music and growth as an artist.

The Street Dancers, by Elizabeth Starr Hill (Viking). Fitzi and her family are performers. She is busy with plays, mime acts, and commercials. Fitzi wants to find out what it is like to be a regular kid like her friends. She wants to have a normal life, but is afraid her family will never understand.

Books for Your Children to Read by Themselves

Ages 4-6

Dancing, by Harriet Ziefert (HarperCollins). Shows a group of young animals as they discover what the world of dance is all about. Includes reusable stickers with words from the story.

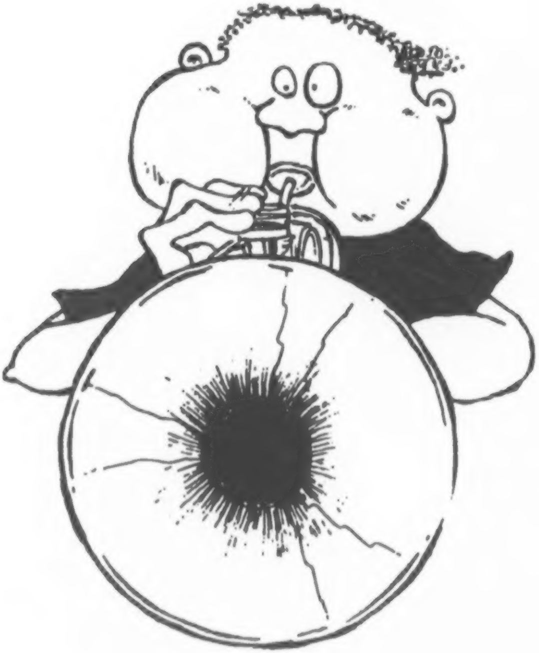


What Can Rabbit Hear? by Lucy Cousins (Tambourine Books). Rabbit listens to what he can hear with his big ears. Children can lift the flap on each page to reveal what rabbit hears.

The Doorknob Collection of Nursery Rhymes, by Judith Stuller Hannant (Little, Brown & Company). Includes "Humpty Dumpty," "This Little Piggy," "Mary Had a Little Lamb," and "Little Miss Muffet." Books have sturdy pages for easy turning.

Ages 6-8

Ben's Trumpet, by Rachel Isadora (Mulberry Books). Ben longs to play the trumpet, but has only an imaginary one. A musician understands Ben's yearning and helps him to realize his dream of becoming a trumpeter.



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Angelina and the Princess, by Katharine Holabird. Even though Angelina does not get the leading role in the ballet, she does her best to make the whole program successful. When the leading lady hurts her foot, Angelina steps in and saves the show.

Dancing Is, by George Ancona. Describes what dancing is and explains why some people dance. Looks at dances from various parts of the world.

Ages 8-10

Music, by Carol Greene (Childrens Press). A general introduction to the world of music. Covers musical language, instruments, and great composers. Also includes definitions of words in the music world.

466

A Very Young Musician, by Jill Krementz (Simon and Schuster). A photo essay about the life of ten-year-old Josh Broder. Josh relates his love of music and tells about learning to play the trumpet.

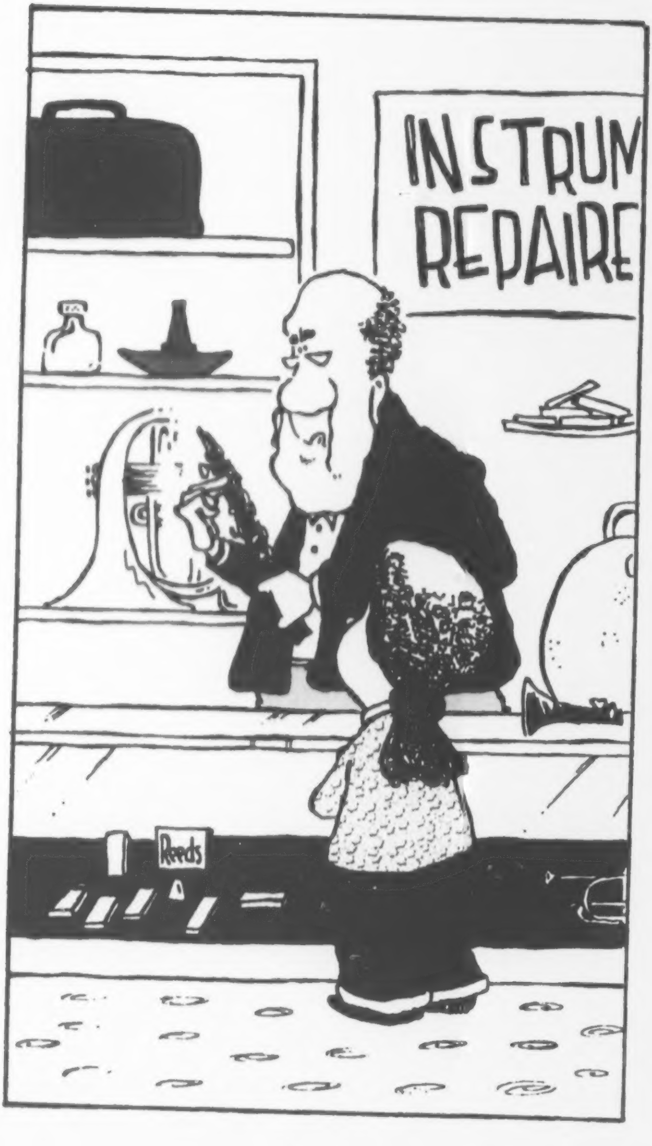
An Usborne Introduction: Understanding Music, by Judy Tatchell (Educational Development Corporation). Presents a broad range of styles and categories of music. Explores instruments, dance, voice, composition, performance, composers, and notation.

Magazines

Also ask your librarian for the following magazines:

- *American Square Dancing*
- *Billboard*
- *Children's Choir*
- *Clavier's Piano Explorer*
- *Creative Kids*
- *Cricket*
- *Dance Magazine*
- *Down Beat*
- *Highlights for Children*
- *Music Makers*
- *Music Time*
- *On Key: The Magazine for Young Pianists*
- *Opera News*
- *Reflections*
- *Young Musicians*
- *Zing*

Read-along Stories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Julie's Special Clarinet

by Vivian Dubrouin

Things to do *before* reading the story

Playing a musical instrument can be fun. It can also help you to learn about sticking with something to become good at it. Talk about some of your special skills in art, music, or sports. Think of how Julie's clarinet playing is like some of your special talents or hobbies.

"How long will it take to fix my clarinet?" asked Julie as she leaned over the counter.

Mr. Clark picked up one of the longer center pieces and looked at it closely. "Oh," he said. "I'm afraid I'll have to send this back to the factory."

"Really!" said Julie. "How long will it take?"

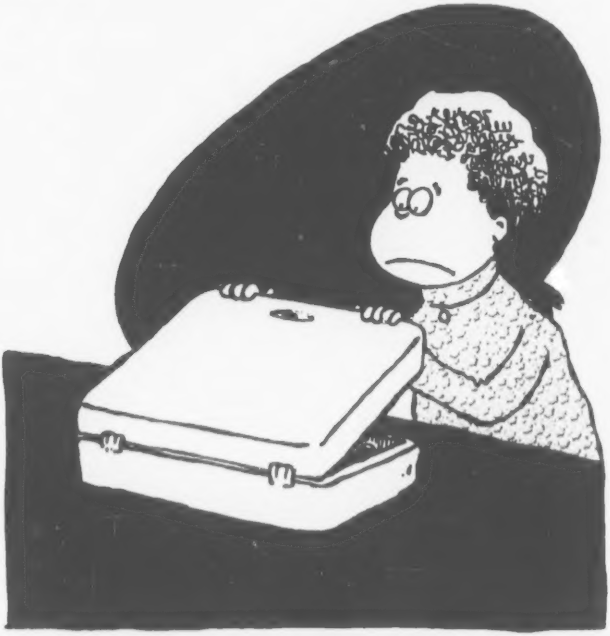
Mr. Clark pushed his glasses up on his forehead and rubbed his chin. "They've been slow lately. Probably be five or six weeks."

"Five or six weeks!" Julie gasped. "Can't you fix it here?"

"Little things I can do myself, but a broken key like this ... I wouldn't want to try it." Mr. Clark put the clarinet piece back in the case.

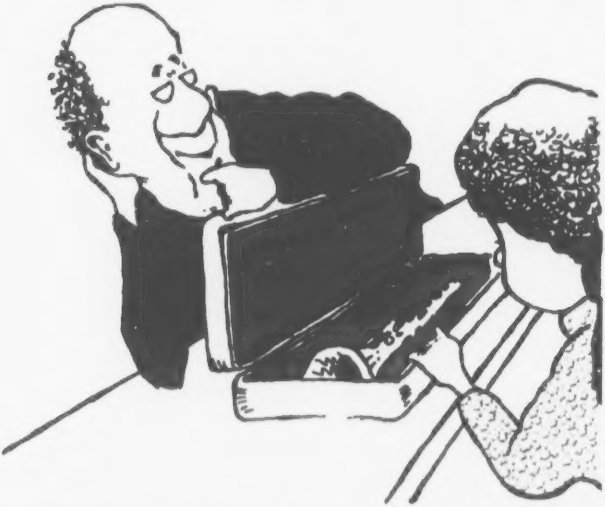
Julie fought back tears. "I can't be without a clarinet for six weeks! I couldn't be in the concert."

"I'll lend you a clarinet to use until yours comes back. I think I still have a few old used ones. I'll check in back." He disappeared through a little doorway.



Julie closed the clarinet case and snapped the locks. It was almost new. She had just started band. Now it was just two months until the big concert.

"Just one left." Mr. Clark brought out a long skinny case and placed it next to Julie's square one. He opened it, and Julie gasped. It was all in one piece and a dull silver color.



"Is that a clarinet?" asked Julie. "I've never seen one like that before!" Her heart sank. She couldn't imagine playing that thing in the school band. She could just hear the kids making fun of her.

"It's an old one, all right." Mr. Clark nodded. He stopped when he saw the look on Julie's face. He patted the silver clarinet. "You take this as a loaner and you'll never be sorry. It's very special." He leaned over the counter and whispered, "It's magic."

Julie was too grown-up to believe in magic. She made a face and shook her head.

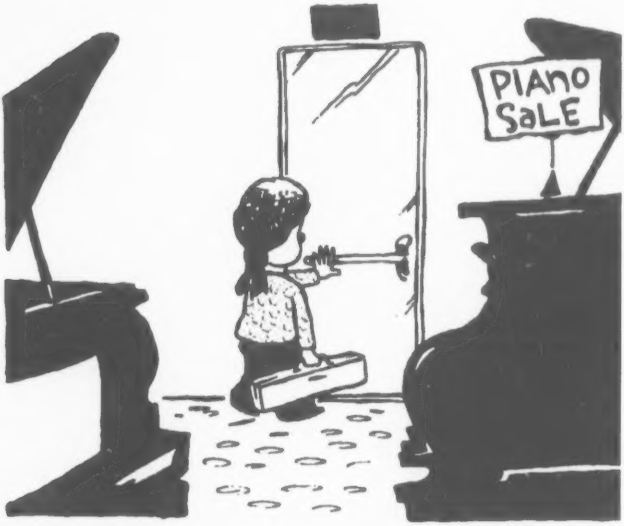
Mr. Clark opened Julie's case and took out a packet of reeds. "Here, keep your extra reeds. You'll need lots of reeds if you want to make the magic work."

"Make the magic work?" Julie asked. "How?"

"Play it every night. It may take a few days to get it started. It's been on my shelf awhile. Sign here." Julie wrote her name, address, and telephone number.

Mr. Clark put the tag on Julie's clarinet case. "But never, never, skip a day after you once start. That would break the magic spell."

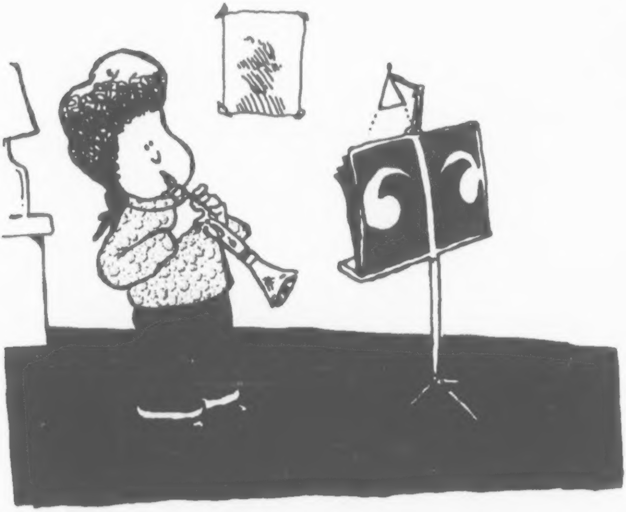
Julie took the skinny case and walked around the pianos and organs until she reached the front door.



A bell jingled as she left the shop. She looked down at the case in her hand. The terrible feeling came back. Could she really take this thing to school?

At home, Julie opened the clarinet case. It was indeed a strange-looking instrument. But the mouthpiece looked just like her own. Julie put it on the silver clarinet.

"Magic! How dumb!" Julie said as she set up her music stand. She played a scale. It sounded pretty. Julie opened her music book. "I'll try a few bars." She played two lines before she made a mistake.

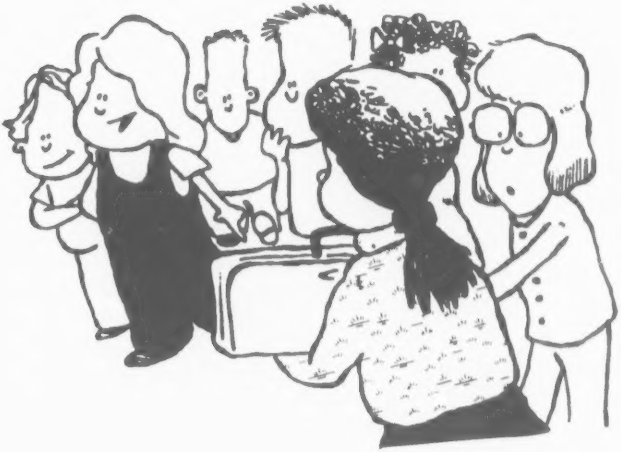


Then Julie played the song she had worked so hard on the night before. She played all the way to the last line without a mistake.

She looked at the clarinet. "Hm-m-m! Maybe you are magic. I had a lot of trouble with that song last night." Julie played the song again.

"If I play this well, maybe the kids won't laugh at this ugly old thing," Julie said.

At school the next day, Julie had just entered the band room when Sally saw the strange case.



"What's that? Where did you get it?" asked Sally.

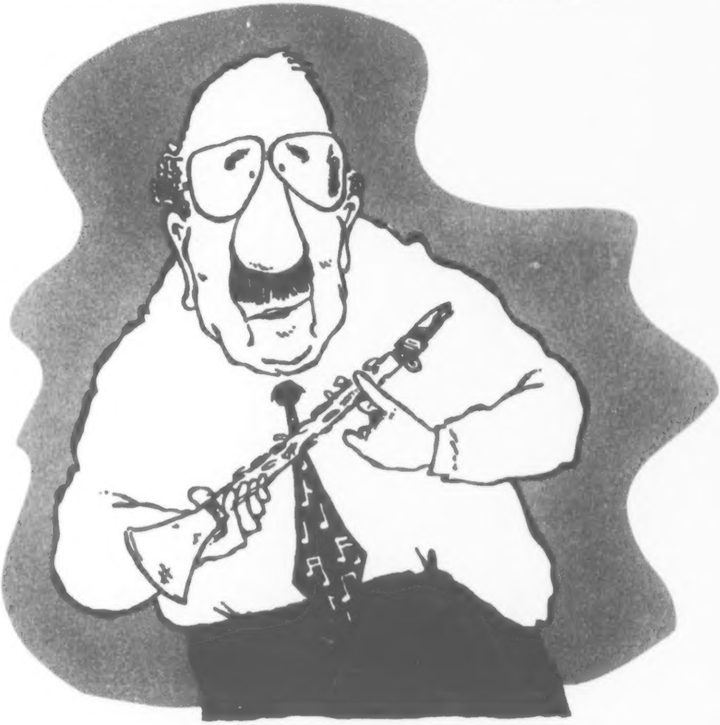
As Julie explained about the broken key and the loaner, more and more kids gathered around her. When Julie finished, she was standing in the middle of a small crowd.

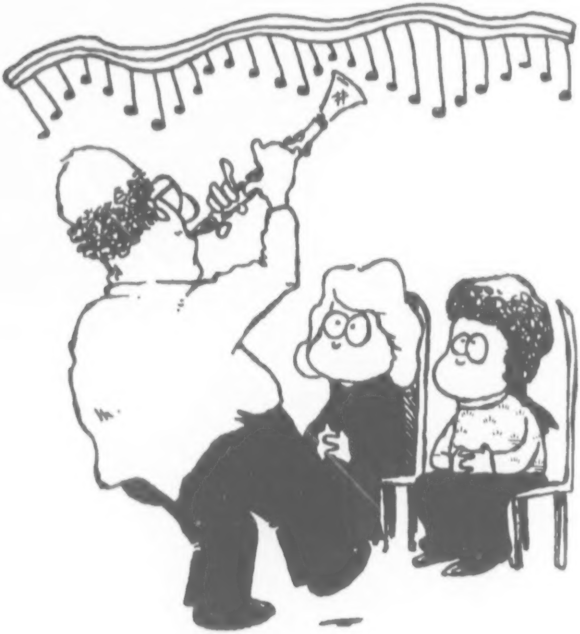
"Open it!" Sally insisted.

Just as Julie unsnapped the case, Mr. Hanson tapped on the conductor's stand.

"In your seats!" he called. Then he stepped through the crowd and stood before Julie. "What do we have here?"

Julie opened her mouth to answer, but Mr. Hanson saw the silver clarinet. "Oh yes! I'll bet yours is being repaired at Mr. Clark's music store." He took the clarinet. "I've seen this one before."





Mr. Hanson played a scale. It was a beautiful sound. "This is an old friend," he said. "Did Mr. Clark tell you it was special?"

Julie nodded.

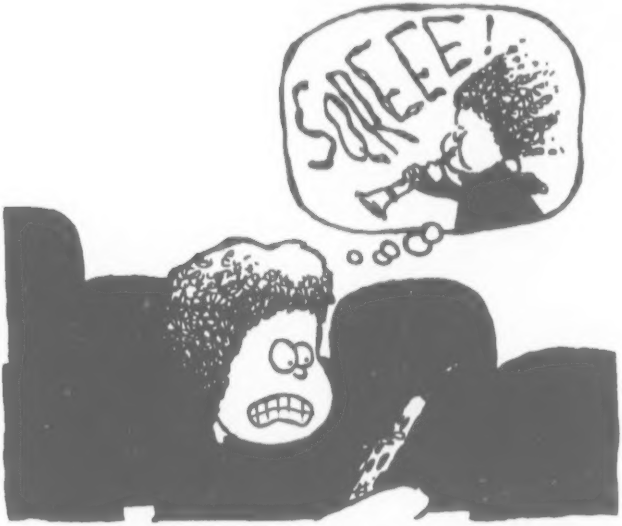
Mr. Hanson smiled and handed it back to Julie. "Did he give you special instructions?"

Julie nodded again.

"See that you follow them. That clarinet has played in my band many times. You're lucky." He stepped back and tapped the stand again. "Page 38!" he called.

Julie took her seat in the last row. She put her music on the stand. She held the clarinet ready to play. Mr. Clark said it was magic, and Mr. Hanson said it was special.

Julie did not have long to wait. Just before the end of class, Mr. Hanson stopped the band. "That's not right," he said. He turned to the clarinets. "One at a time. I want each of you to play the first three bars of the top line."



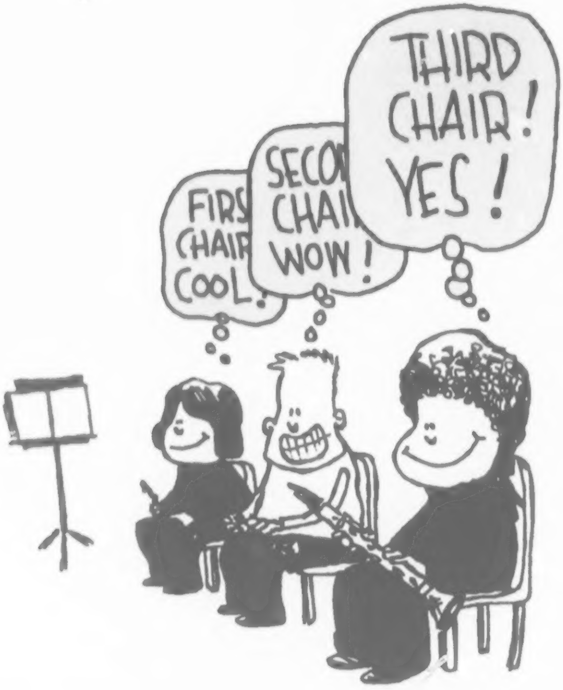
Julie held her breath. She hated it when Mr. Hanson did this. She always made a mistake when he asked her to play alone. But when her turn came, Julie played the three bars just as perfectly as she had practiced them.

"Good!" replied Mr. Hanson. "That's the way I want all of you to practice it tonight."

Julie left the band room. She was sure now that the clarinet was magic. Somehow it was special, and she would play it fifteen minutes tonight.

Julie did play the clarinet that night and every night all that month.

Just two weeks before the concert, Julie played the piece so well that Mr. Hanson put her in the first row, in the third seat. That meant there were only two people in the band that played better than Julie.


FIRS CHAIR COOL!
SECO CHAI WOW!
THIRD CHAIR! YES!

Julie wanted to run out of the band room, but Mr. Hanson stopped her.

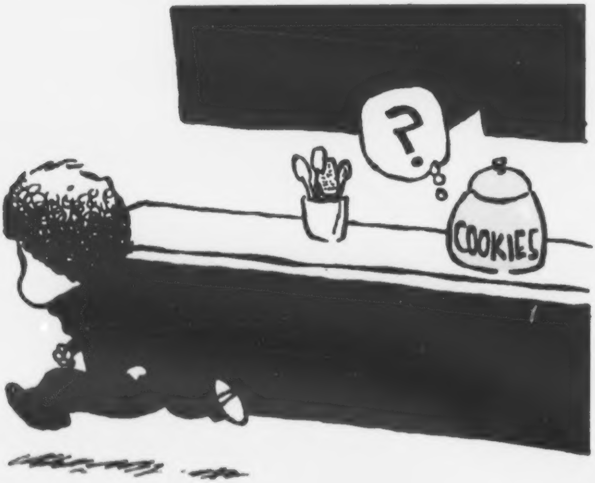
"Julie, that song on page 38 that you do so well..." he said.

"The Dancer's Song?" Julie asked.

"Yes. Would you play that for a solo at the concert?"

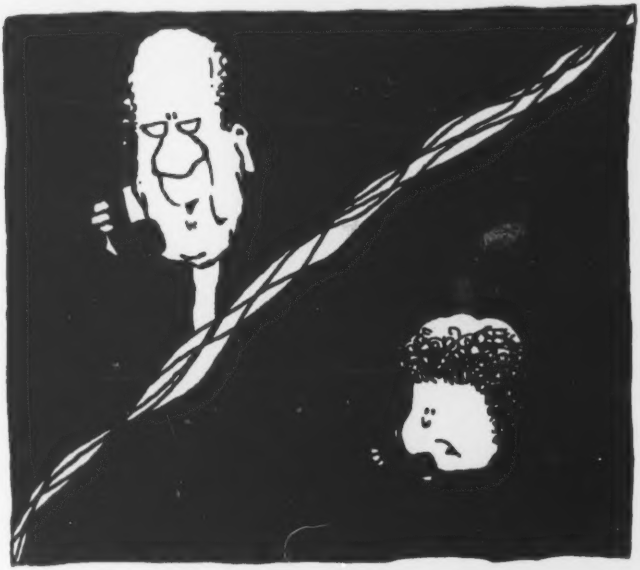
Julie could hardly believe her ears. First row! And a solo!

"Yes! I certainly will!" Julie did run out of the band room. She wanted to hop and skip and sing. She went to her room without even stopping for after-school cookies. She turned to page 38.



"What a magic clarinet," she said to herself. Before she played one note, the telephone rang.

"Julie!" said the voice on the telephone. "This is Mr. Clark."



"Oh, no!" gasped Julie. She held her breath, as he continued.

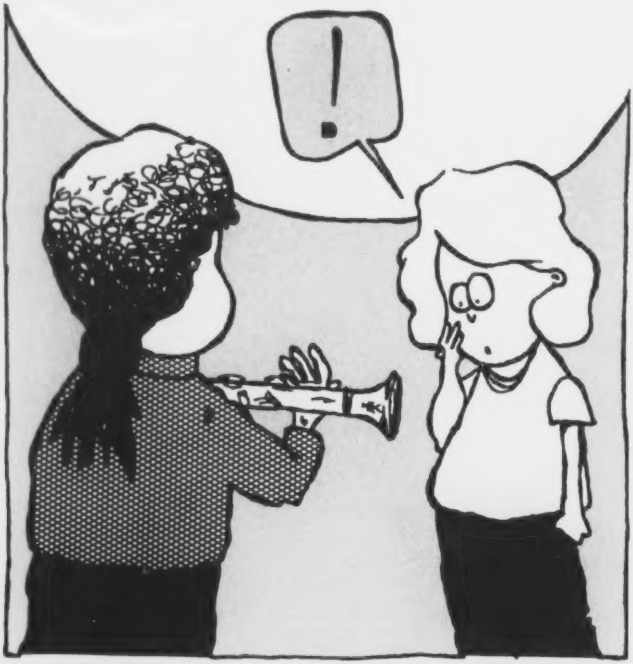
"Your clarinet came back this morning. It's as good as new."

"I can't come now, Mr. Clark." Julie's voice was a whisper.

The voice on the telephone went on. "There's another girl here with a broken clarinet. I promised her the loaner. Could you bring it in now?"

Julie hung up the phone. She took her reed out of the mouthpiece, put the clarinet in the case, and walked down the street to the music store.

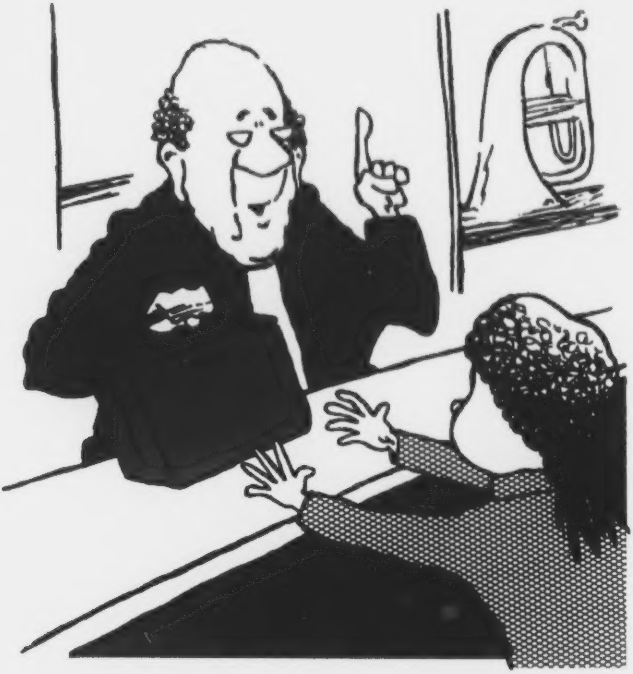
A girl about Julie's age waited at the counter. When she saw the silver clarinet, she gasped. "Is that a clarinet?"



"Oh, it's a special one! It's magic!" said Julie. "I never played well. I was in the last row. Now I'm in the first row, and I'm playing a solo in the concert."

"You must have followed the instructions, Julie," Mr. Clark was smiling.

"Yes," said Julie. "Fifteen minutes every night, and I never missed a night."



"Keep it up," said Mr. Clark. He handed Julie's case to her. "I'll send you a bill."

Julie took the case. As the bell jingled, Julie wondered. What did Mr. Clark mean by "keep it up?" This wasn't the magic clarinet.

In her own room Julie put together the pieces of her clarinet. She stared at page 38 and the song she had not been able to play the day the clarinet key broke.

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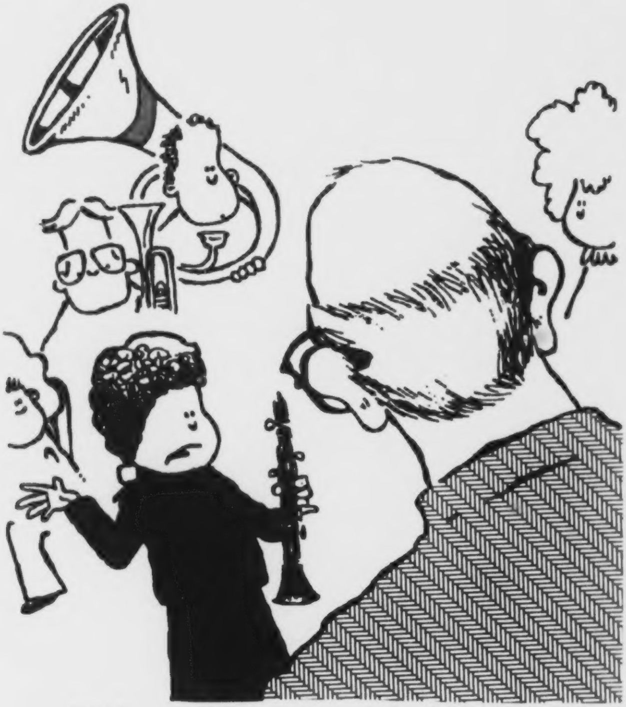
At a slow speed Julie began to play. Soon she forgot what clarinet she was playing. She played "The Dancer's Song" again and again. She could play it without a mistake.

Still Julie was not sure. At band the next day, she told Mr. Hanson about the clarinet. "I'm not sure I can play the solo on this one," she admitted.



"Did you practice last night?" he asked.

Julie nodded.

"Try it slowly," he said.

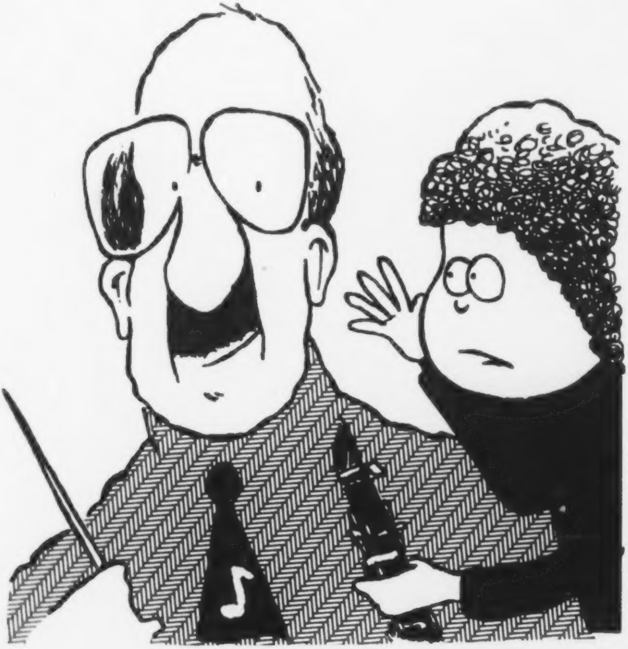
Julie began to play. The band room was quiet. Everyone listened. Julie did not make a mistake.

"Good!" said Mr. Hanson. "Try it faster each time. Practice every night. You'll have it right by concert time."

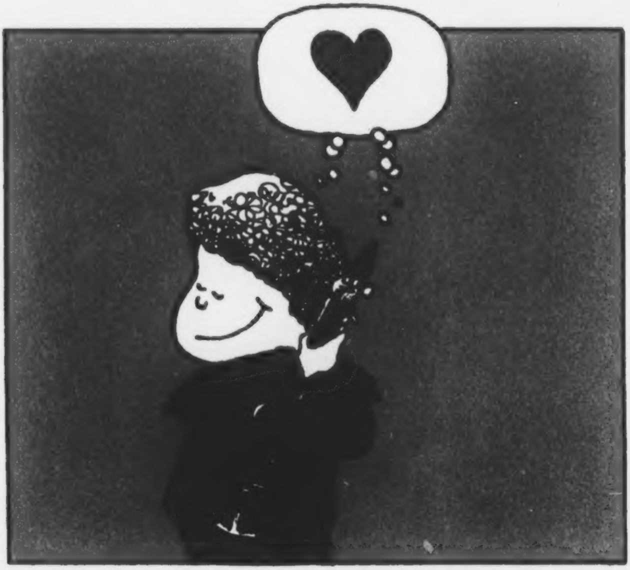
"But," said Julie, "this clarinet's not..."

"Not what?" asked Mr. Hanson.

"Not magic," Julie whispered.



Mr. Hanson smiled. "But the instructions are! If you keep following them, you can make any clarinet magic."



Julie hugged the clarinet. "Me and my magic clarinet."

Things to do *after* reading the story

Talk about why Julie's clarinet was special. Was it something about the clarinet or about what Julie did with it that was "magic?" Think of things in your life that you could make special by putting energy and time into them.

The Nutcracker

Retold by Richard Stewart

Things to do *before* reading the story

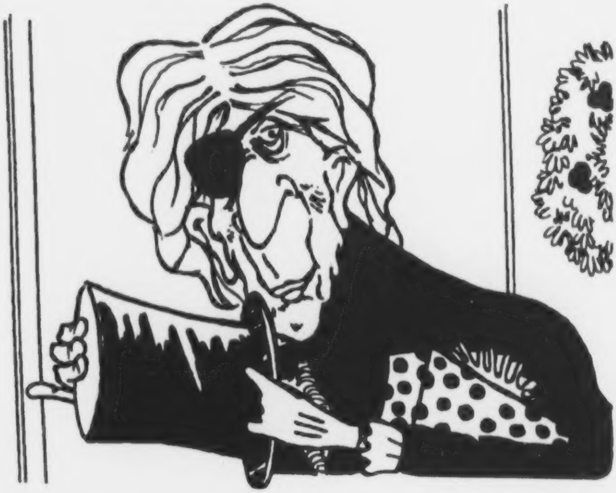
The story of *The Nutcracker* starts in Germany and then moves to a make-believe land. Talk about times when you pretended you were in a make-believe place. As you read *The Nutcracker,* imagine yourself as someone who knows the people in the story. Relax, close your eyes, and pretend you are going along with Marie on her adventures with Godfather Drosselmeier, the Mouse King, and the Prince.

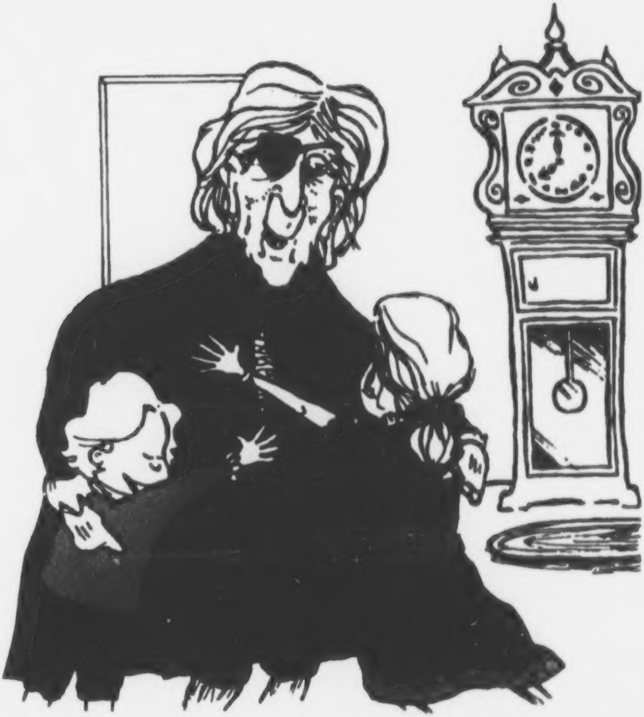
It was Christmas Eve, and snow was falling softly on the little German town where the Stahlbaum family lived. The sound of silver bells got louder as the sleigh of Dr. Drosselmeier drew up to the Stahlbaum house. Inside, Marie and Fritz, the Stahlbaum children, were sitting on the couch reading their favorite books.

Marie whispered to her younger brother, "Earlier today Father told me that Godfather Drosselmeier was working on our Christmas gifts in his shop. I think that this year, one of our gifts will be something really special!"

Fritz clapped his hands together with joy and cried, "What do you think Godfather Drosselmeier has made for us?"

At that moment, a small, thin man with a wrinkled face and a patch over his right eye appeared in the doorway. It was Dr. Drosselmeier. He was wearing a beautiful white wig, a tall stovepipe hat, and a long, dark satin cape. It was rumored that he was no ordinary doctor, but one who possessed strange and mysterious powers. He was also a well-known craftsman and inventor, and tonight he was laden with wonderful presents for the Stahlbaum children!





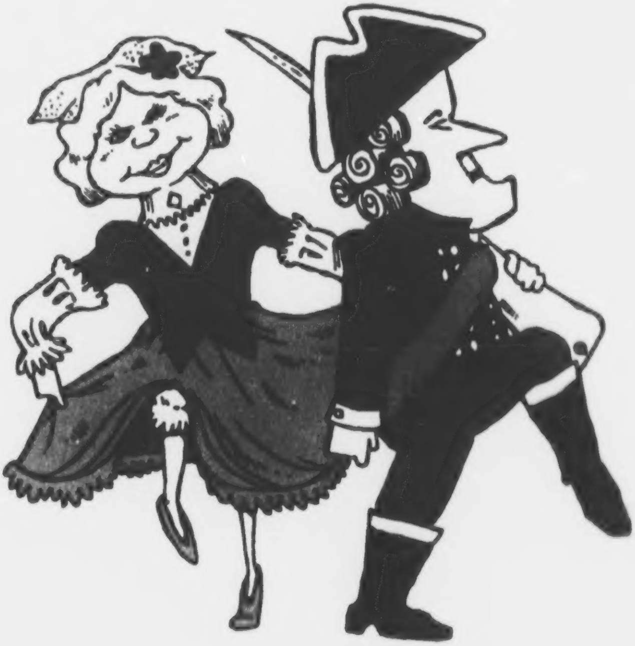
Marie and Fritz ran to greet their beloved godfather. When they reached him, they embraced the old man warmly and he said, "How are you, my dear children?"

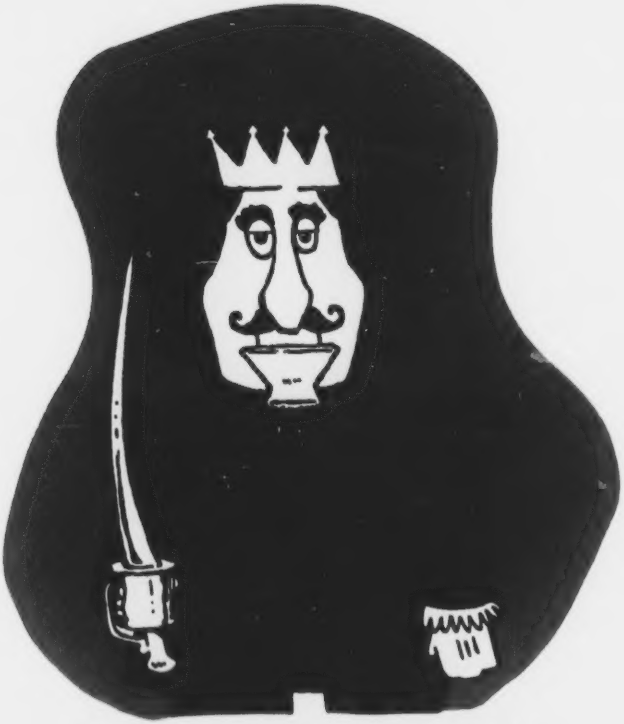
"We are fine, Godfather Drosselmeier. Merry Christmas!" they said happily.

"And a Merry Christmas to you, my dears," the doctor replied, and then went off to greet the children's parents.

After exchanging greetings with the Stahlbaums, Dr. Drosselmeier raised his arms and asked for the family's attention. He reached into his cape and brought out a set of hand-carved wooden soldiers for Fritz. "Thank you, Godfather Drosselmeier," said Fritz, as he reached for his present.

Next the old man wound up two large mechanical dolls, one a soldier and the other a beautiful girl dressed in blue. The dolls did some fancy high steps, and when their dance was over, they collapsed gracefully in the corner.





Finally, the old doctor brought forth a brightly painted wooden figure with big flashing eyes, a bushy beard made of wool, and big saw-like teeth. Though it looked like a big toy soldier, it wasn't one. It was a Nutcracker! Both of the children reached out for the finely carved doll, but Dr. Drosselmeier presented it to Marie.

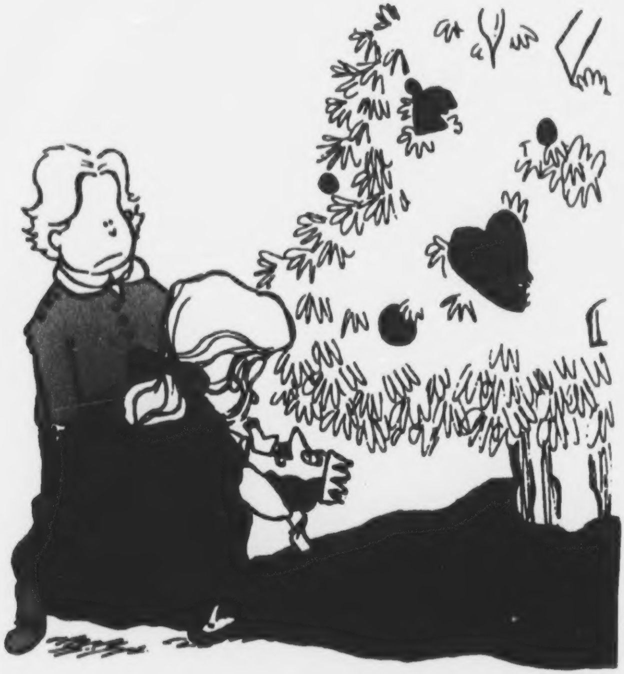
"Oh, thank you, dear Godfather!" said Marie excitedly as she cradled the Nutcracker in her arms and stroked its soft, curly beard.

Fritz immediately became jealous that Marie had received such a special gift and shouted, "Give it to me! It will make a perfect leader for my new toy soldiers!"

Fritz snatched the Nutcracker from Marie's arms. But as he dashed across the room, he tripped and the Nutcracker crashed to the floor.

"The Nutcracker is broken!" cried Marie.

"It's all right," said Godfather Drosselmeier, "I will mend it with my handkerchief now and fix it better for you later."

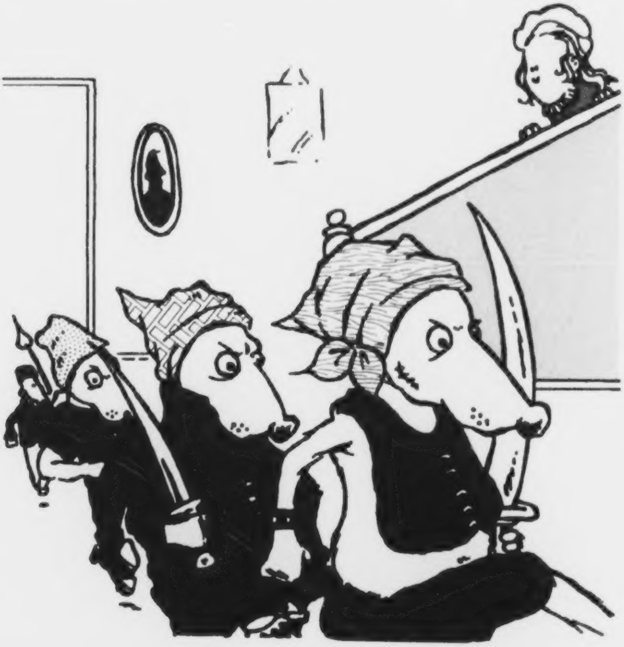


Then the good doctor bandaged the Nutcracker and placed it gently into Marie's arms. She put it under the Christmas tree, and the children were sent to bed.

As Marie and Fritz were being tucked in for the night, Dr. Drosselmeier quietly repaired the broken Nutcracker with some tools he had in his bag. When he was finished, he placed the doll beside Fritz's toy soldiers.

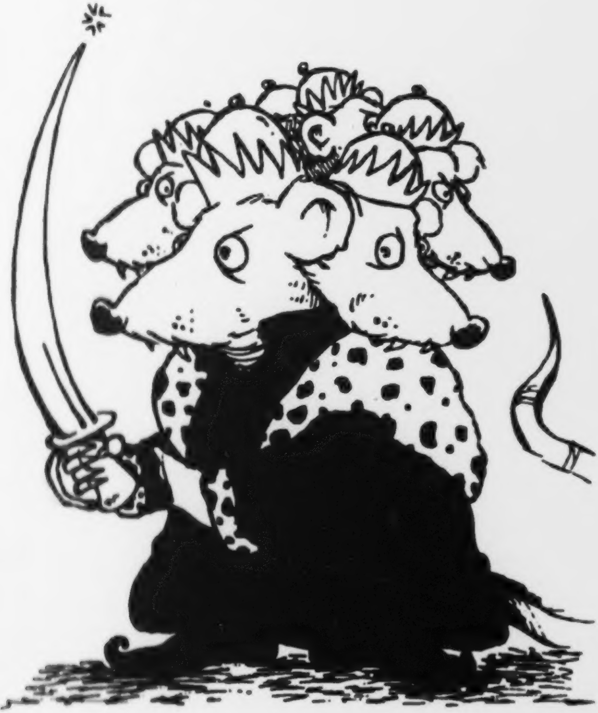
After a while, the grandfather clock in the living room struck twelve and awakened Marie. She heard a faint noise downstairs, and with each stroke of the clock she felt more scared. She tiptoed out of her bedroom and looked down the stairs where there were strange shadows along the wall.

It was an army of mice! Big, gray mice were pouring into the living room.

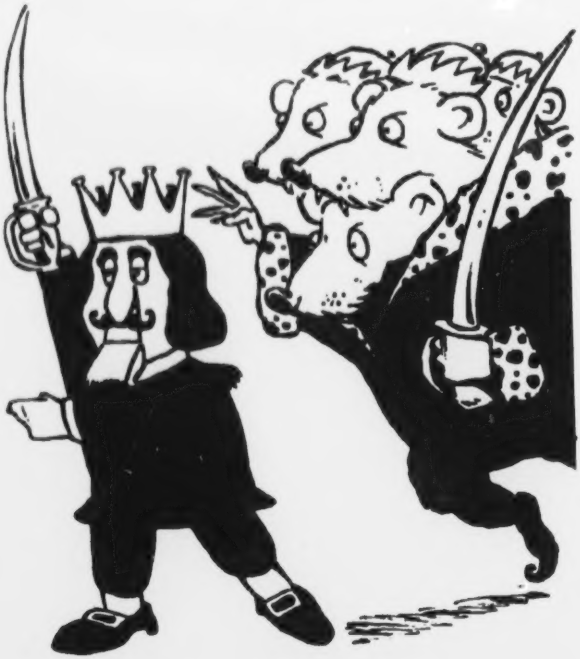


"What shall I do?" gasped Marie, "What shall I do?" She was trembling with fear as she started toward the living room to see what was happening.

The mice began to steal toys and candy from under the Christmas tree. Their leader, the ferocious Mouse King, had seven heads and wore a crown on each. Just then a small voice from the other side of the room caught her attention. It was the Nutcracker giving commands to Fritz's army of toy soldiers!

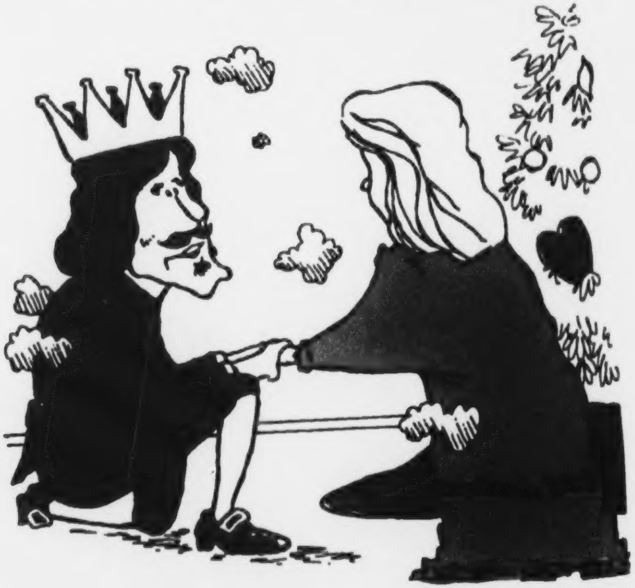


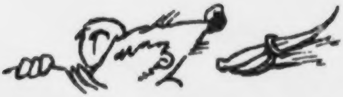
A battle began between the mice and the Nutcracker's tiny army. Bayonets flashed, and squeaks and hisses filled the air. The toy soldiers fought bravely, but the mouse army was strong and great in number. Suddenly, Marie saw the Mouse King leap to attack the Nutcracker from behind.



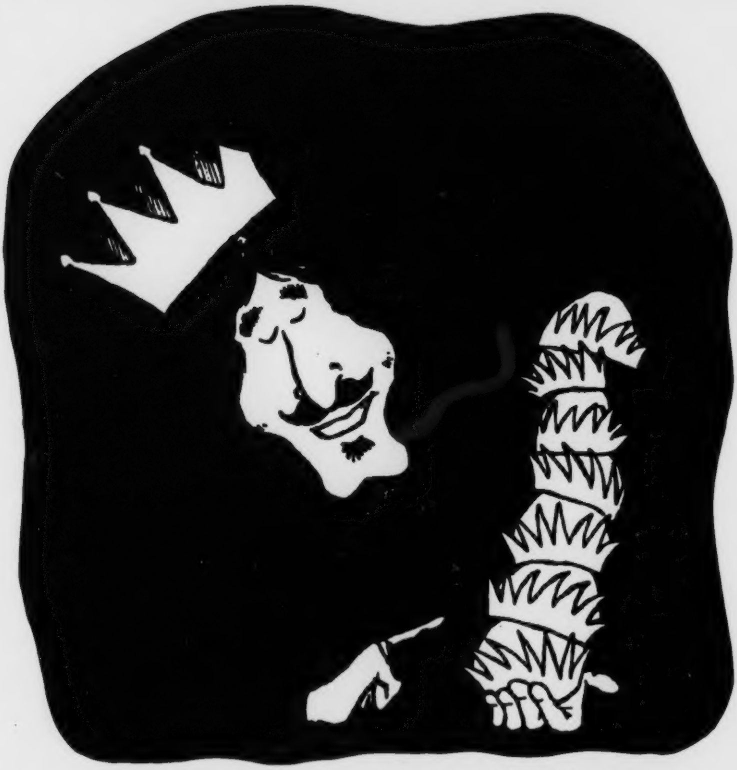
"Look out!" Marie cried to the Nutcracker, and quickly pulled the Mouse King's lashing tail. As the giant mouse turned to face Marie, the Nutcracker, with a wave of his sword, slew him. The frightened mice ran off in all directions when they saw their leader was dead.

All of a sudden there was a puff of smoke where the nutcracker was standing. As the smoke cleared, there stood a handsome young prince! The prince went down on one knee and said, "I am Prince Nathaniel Drosselmeier, nephew of your godfather, Dr. Drosselmeier. I was changed into a nutcracker by the mother of the Mouse King."





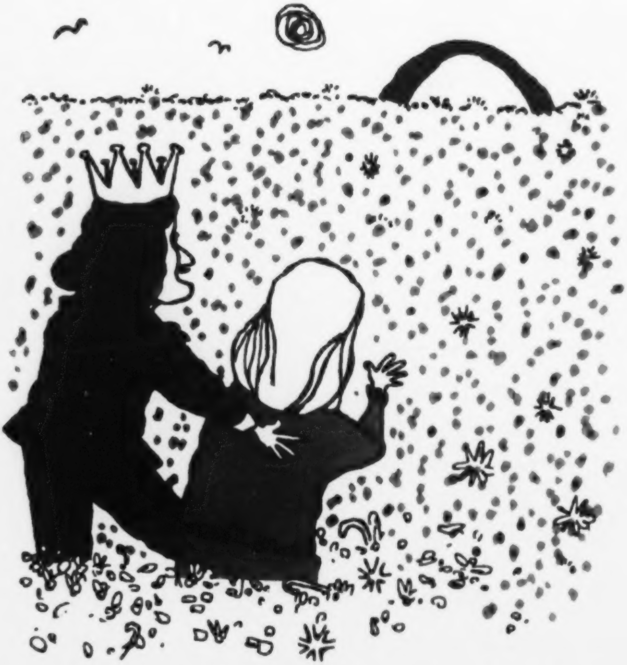
"It was my fate to fight the Mouse King and conquer him before I could be turned back into a prince. You, dear Marie, gave me the courage to fight the evil mice who dared to enter your house and steal your gifts."



With that, the Prince stripped off the Mouse King's seven golden crowns, and handed them to Marie. She accepted them cheerfully. Then he rose to his feet and continued, "My dear Marie, I am grateful that I was turned into a nutcracker. Otherwise, I would not have met you. Now, be kind enough to follow me on a visit to my kingdom, the Land of Dolls, where I can show you all sorts of wonderful things."

"I'll gladly go with you, Prince, but don't let it be too far or take too long, for I haven't had much sleep tonight, and I am rather tired."

"In that case," the Prince replied, "we'll take the shortest route."



The Prince took Marie's hand, and magically the two found themselves in a beautiful meadow dotted with gemlike sparks.

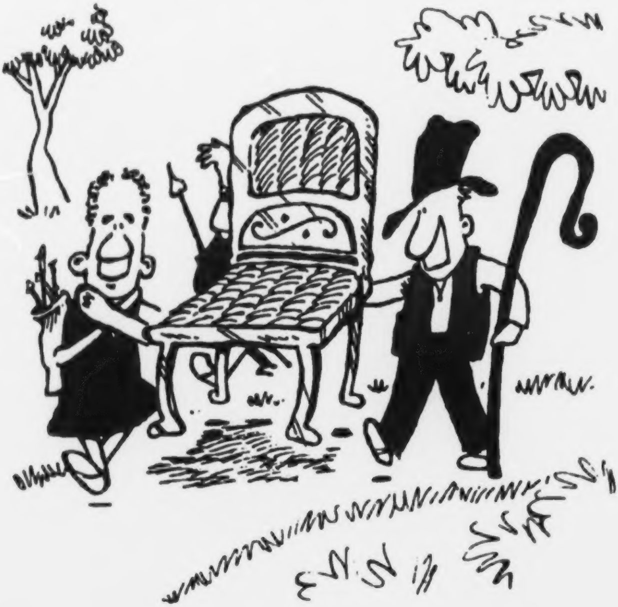
"This is Candy Meadow," the Prince announced, "and in a moment we'll pass through that arch."

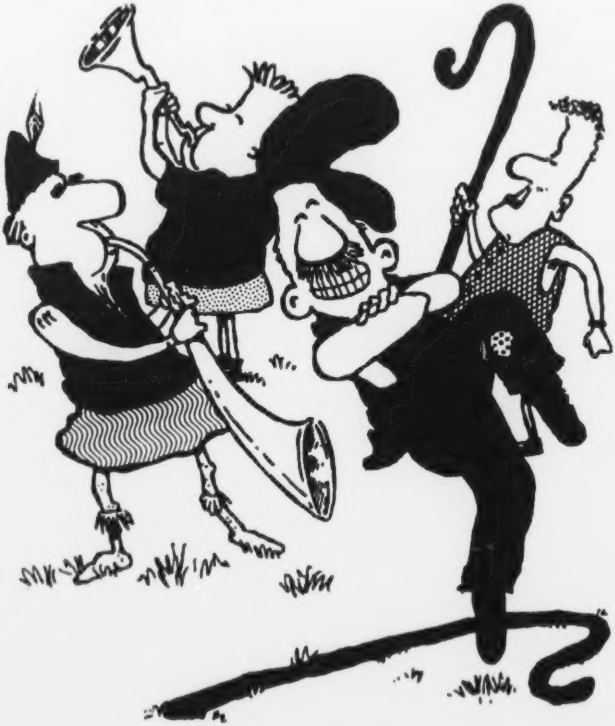
Marie looked up and saw a beautiful arch that appeared to be made of brown and black marble. But when Marie looked closer, she saw that it was made of baked almonds and raisins.

"This is Almond and Raisin Arch," said the Prince, "and beyond it is Christmas Woods."

Marie and the Prince walked through the arch on a path made of finely molded nougat. On both sides of them, sweet smells came from Christmas Woods, and the glittering lights on the trees proved to be gold and silver fruits hanging from many-colored stems strung with tinsel. Orange-scented breezes blew through the trees, the leaves and branches rustled, and the tinsel tinkled merrily.

Then the Prince clapped his hands, and a group of little shepherds and hunters appeared carrying a golden chair with a white licorice cushion for Marie. The leader of the shepherds said graciously, "Please be seated, Mistress Marie."



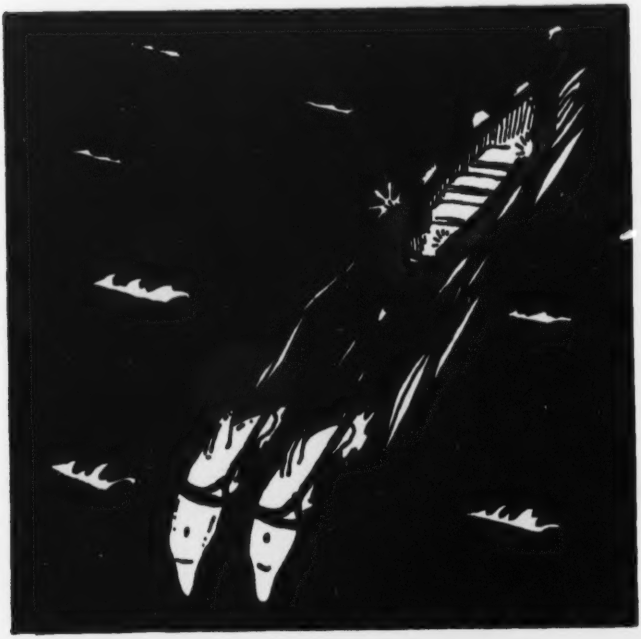


As soon as Marie sat down, the shepherds danced a merry ballet, while the hunters played their horns. And then, as quickly as they had appeared, the little people all vanished into the woods.

"That was perfectly lovely," said Marie, getting up and following the Prince, who seemed to be in a hurry.

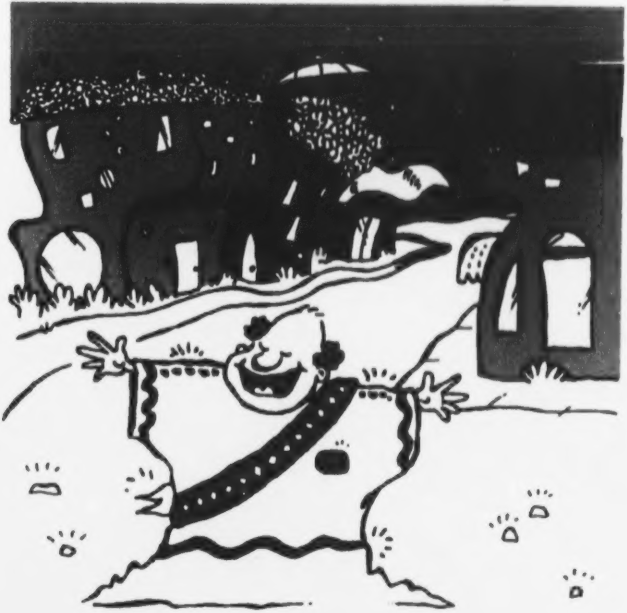
"We mustn't delay," he said briskly. "On to the capital. We must see Candytown!"

The Prince clapped his hands again, and a brisk wind came up over the nearby lake, which had silvery-white swans floating on it and diamond fish swimming in its rosy waters. Then a gondola made of shining jewels appeared in the distance and quickly drew closer. It was pulled by two golden dolphins.



Marie and the Prince boarded the beautiful vessel, which drew off toward Candytown at great speed. The two dolphins spouted crystal streams high into the air as two silvery voices sang a joyful song. Soon the vessel reached shore, where the Prince and Marie found themselves in a small thicket that sparkled and glittered.

"This," said the Prince, "is Marmalade Grove, and over there you can see the capital."

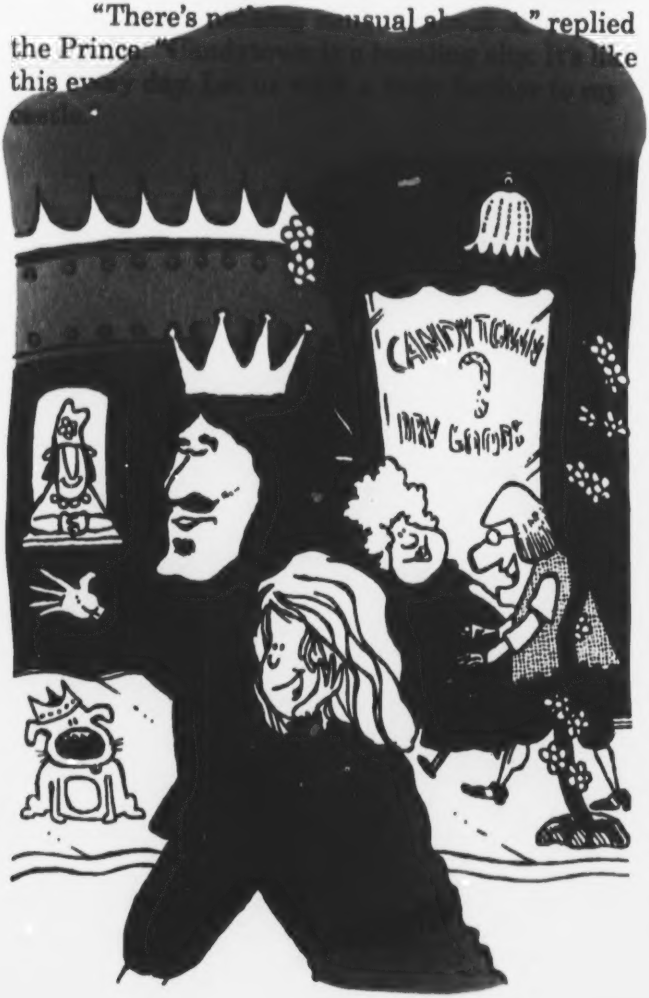


Marie was surprised to see a beautiful city spread before her on a broad, flowery plain. The walls and towers were of the most brilliant colors, and the shapes of the buildings were like nothing she had ever seen! The roofs of the houses were delicately braided crowns, and the towers were wreathed with beautiful flowers. As Marie and the Prince emerged from the gateway to the city, a little man in a silk robe threw his arms around the Prince and said:

"Welcome, my Prince, welcome to Candytown."

Marie was amazed by the splendor of the little man's robes and the clamor of little voices around her as she and the Prince walked through Candytown. "What does it all mean?" she asked.

"There's [illegible] unusual [illegible]," replied the Prince. [illegible] like this [illegible]



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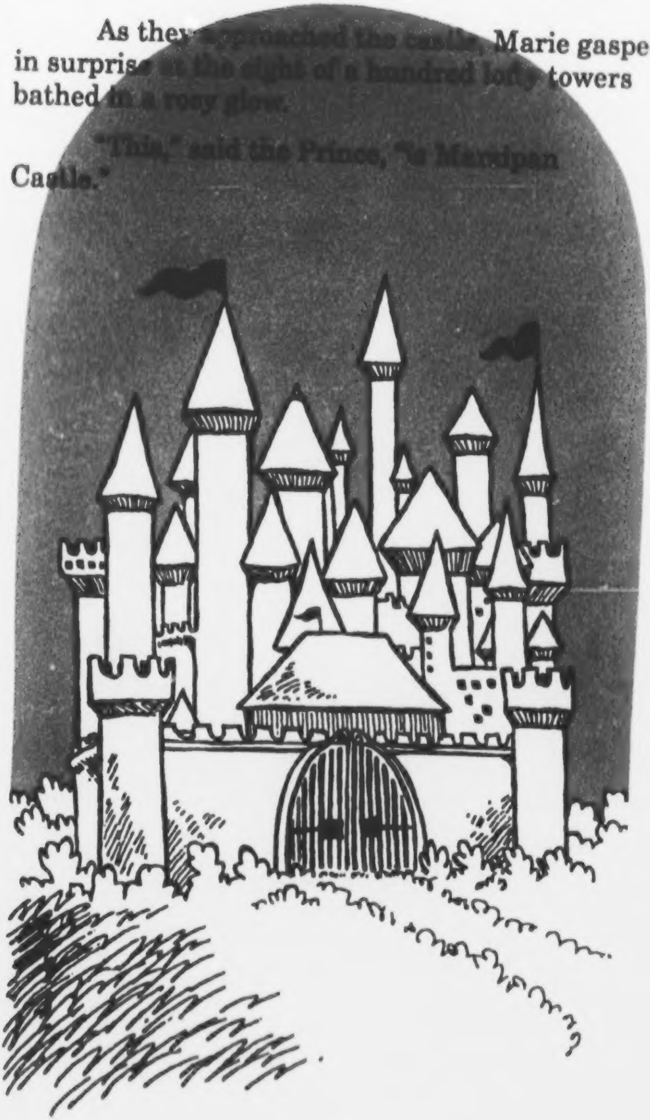
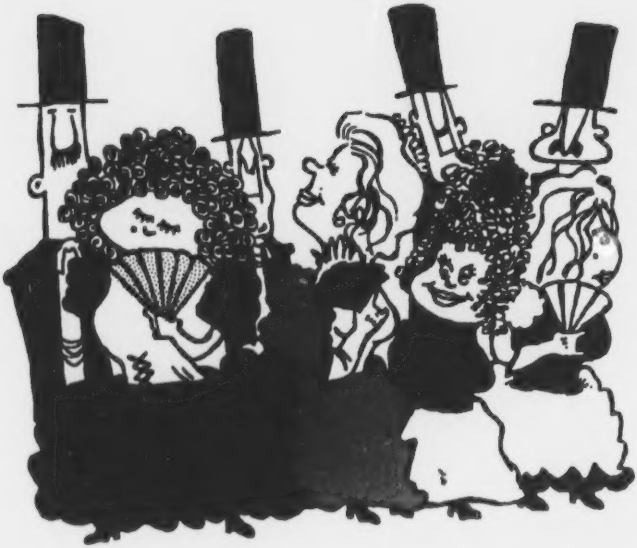
As they approached the castle, Marie gasped in surprise at the sight of a hundred lofty towers bathed in a rosy glow.

"This," said the Prince, "is Marzipan Castle."





At that moment, trumpets sounded and music filled the air, the gates of the castle opened, and four ladies with their servants stepped out. After embracing the Prince tenderly, the maidens cried out:

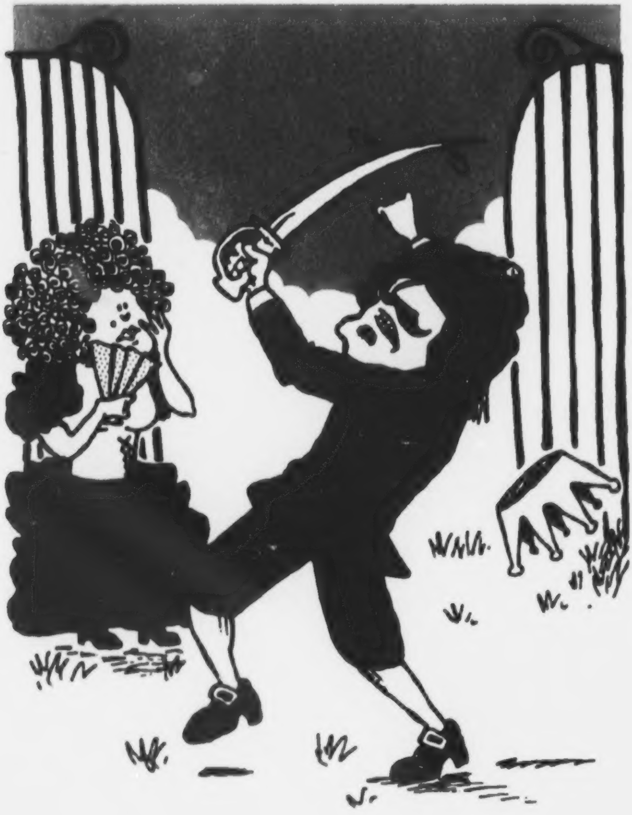
"O my beloved Prince, my brother!"

The Prince was deeply touched. He wiped a stream of tears from his eyes, took hold of Marie's hand, and said with feeling:

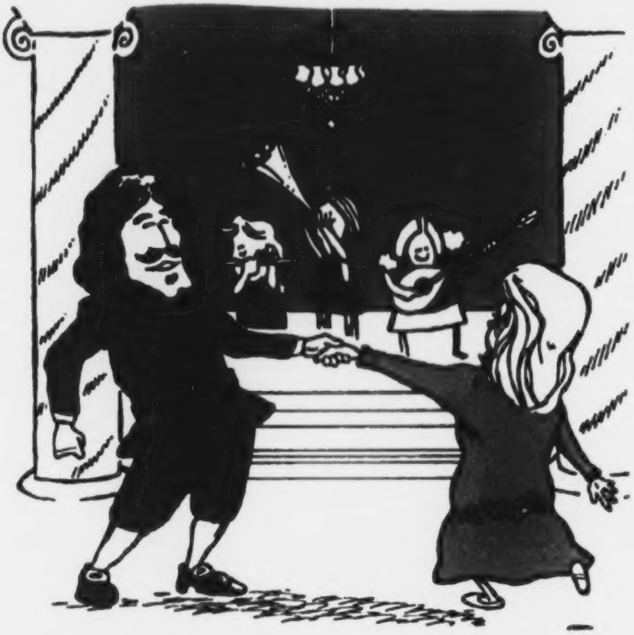
"This is Mistress Marie, the goddaughter of a famous physician. She saved my life by distracting the Mouse King at just the right time, so that I could slay him."

The ladies exclaimed, "We praise you and thank you for saving our brother, most honorable Marie!"

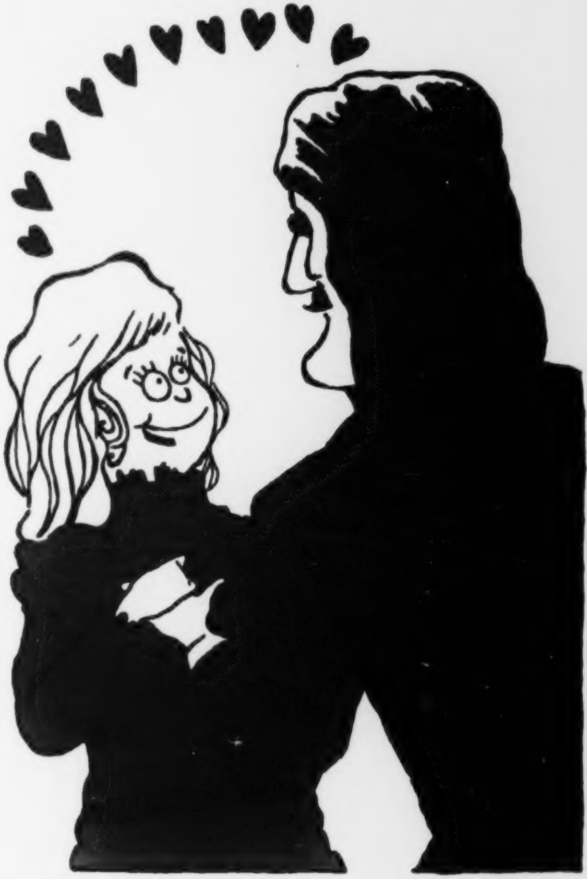
Then the Prince related slowly the story of his battle with the Mouse King—how the terrible King of the Mice had almost conquered him and his army of toy soldiers, when brave Marie came to his aid.



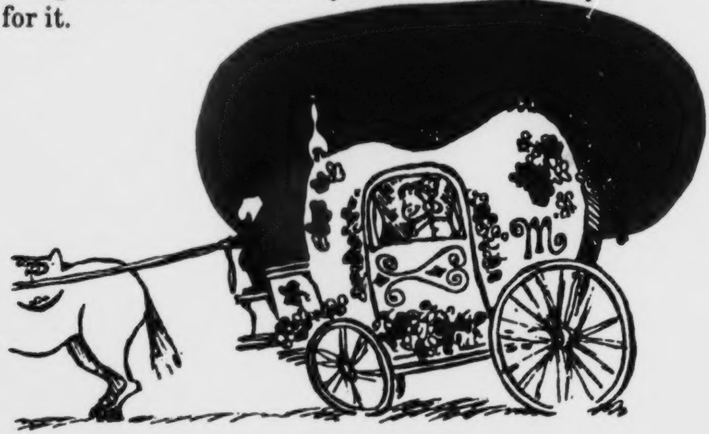
After finishing his tale, the Prince summoned the court musicians, and everyone joined in a lovely dance. No sooner was the Prince alone with Marie on the dance floor when he went down on his knee and said, "Oh, my precious Marie, you see before you the happiest of men, whose life you saved this very night. In that instant, I ceased to be a lowly nutcracker and became my former self. Oh, dear Mistress Stahlbaum, favor me with your hand in marriage. Share with me my crown and kingdom. Reign with me over Marzipan Castle and the Land of Dolls."



Marie took the prince's hand, raised him to his feet, and said softly, "Dear Nathaniel, you are a kind gentleman, and you rule over a magical kingdom full of charming and amusing people. In just one year I will be old enough to marry you. Therefore, I accept you as my betrothed."



So Marie was engaged to the Prince. In a year and a day he called for her in a golden carriage drawn by four white horses. Twenty-thousand brightly dressed guests wearing pearls and diamonds danced at the wedding. Marie then became queen of a country full of sparkling woods, rosy marzipan castles, and many other amazing things that can be seen if you have the right eye for it.



Things to do *after* reading the story

Think about what you would have done if you were Marie. Talk about what it felt like to imagine yourself in the story. Think of other adventures that Marie could go on and write them down in a little story of your own.

We hope you have had fun with these stories!

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How Can I Prepare My Young Child for Reading? by Paula C. Grinnell. Presents ideas to assist parents in preparing their children for reading. Focuses on children from birth through kindergarten. ($1.75)

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Stories for Children and Parents:

1. Make the story fun for children—your primary audience. The adult reading along will enjoy the story if the child does.
2. Make sure that your story is acceptable to parents. We do not want parents to reject the story because it is inappropriate for their children. Writing a story that is interesting to children and at the same time pleasing to parents is a big challenge.
3. Your story should be no longer than eight double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.
4. Correct grammar and syntax are important. For the most part we choose to model correct standard English.
5. Be careful about the vocabulary you use in your story. Rule out really long and difficult-to-pronounce words. Use "plain" English, when you can—words that have English roots rather than French or Latin ones.
6. Make your stories gender inclusive. Do not use sexist terminology or ideas. Our stories must be interesting to both boys and girls.
7. You may illustrate your own story, but they must be line drawings in pen and ink only. The drawings must be able to be scanned, so please avoid excessive detail.

Articles for Parents:

1. Articles should contain practical information and helpful strategies. Anecdotes and other experiences modeling useful learning methods are particularly desirable.
2. Your article should be no longer than four double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.

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TAP TAP
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Future Issues of *Parents and Children Together*

- *Poetry*
- *Test Taking*
- *Library*
- *Earth Day/Environment*
- *Different Cultures*
- *Improving Your Child's Memory*
- *Art Education*
- *Expressing Yourself through Writing*
- *Speaking and Listening Skills*
- *American History*
- *Collaborative Learning*
- *Developing Your Child's Vocabulary*
- *Famous People/Biographies*

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This booklet has a companion audio tape on "Success with Test-Taking." Occasionally there are directions on the tape that do not appear in the booklet or headings in the booklet that aren't spoken on the tape.

A+ Wally
A+ Joe

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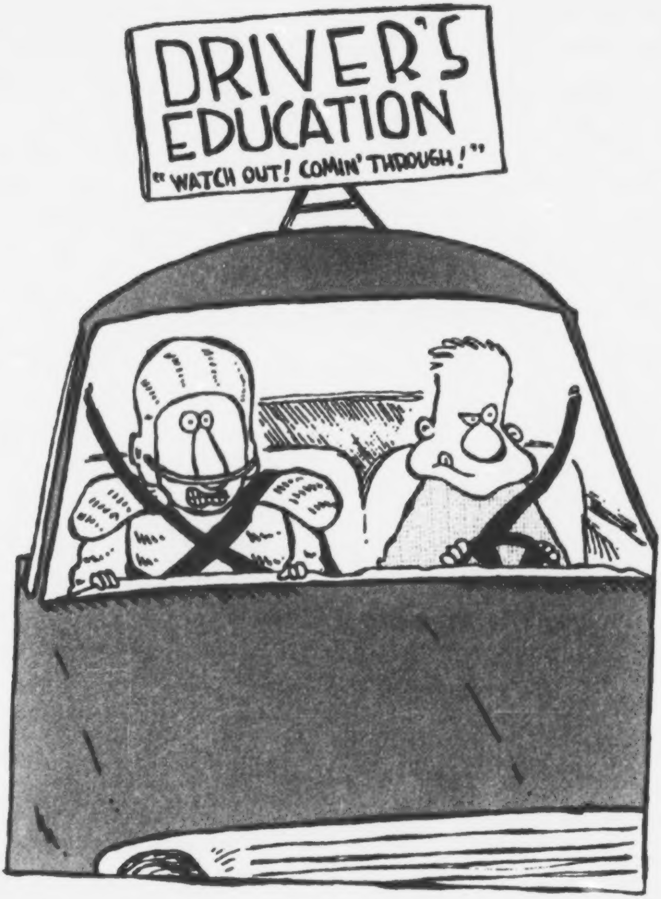
Happy
new
YEAR


DRIVER'S EDUCATION
"WATCH OUT! COMIN' THROUGH!"

Getting Started

Welcome to this issue of *Parents and Children Together.* During childhood and adulthood we are faced with taking all kinds of tests. In this issue we share some ideas on how parents can help their children cope with and learn from tests.

On side B of the tape (and in the second half of the booklet) we have three read-along stories. We encourage you to listen to these stories and to read them with your children, so that they can participate in the excitement of story reading. Of course, your child can also listen to the stories alone, if you wish.

Everyone Can Do Better on Tests

Passing tests is something we all do almost everyday—in school, on the job, playing sports, dealing with family problems. Every time someone says "You did it right." you passed a test. That's all a test is—a judgment about a particular event or a particular behavior.

Oh, but some tests are worse than others, you say. And that's right. Those situations that are labeled tests put psychological pressure on us because we know that we're on the spot. School tests are like that. Starting a job on probation puts pressure on us because other people may know that we are being tested to see if we are fit for that job. Under those conditions, we may build up fears in ourselves and create internal stress that prevents us from doing our best.

Test Anxiety

Having unusually strong fears about taking tests is called test anxiety. When you have test anxiety, you are experiencing feelings of fear that you can't measure up to certain expectations—and so you don't. If your child suffers from test anxiety, there are a number of things you can do to relieve the fear.

First of all, help your child to recognize that it is a fear, a feeling that slows down her reactions, and that it actually gets in the way of her ability to perform. President Franklin Roosevelt once said to the American people: "We have nothing to fear but fear itself." In other words, when we concentrate on failure and on our own embarrassment, we create a barrier to our best performance. That's the reason that some children freeze up or begin to cry when faced with a test. They have built up so much internal stress that they are immobilized with fear.

If your child is reasonably prepared for a test and knows how to follow the directions, there is no reason why he cannot do an adequate job. Preparation can give your child the confidence to tackle a test because he has built up the knowledge and the skills needed for success. This is where your attitude and your help comes into play. You can help him prepare by planning regular reviews of the subject in advance of the test. For example, you can take five minutes every other night to quiz your child on key points.

You can also help by showing your child how to take notes that will remind her of the important facts and ideas covered in the test. Most test topics can be summarized in one sentence. Work with your child to write a summary sentence that gives the theme of the study unit. Learning to write a summary sentence is a good note-taking technique that will help your child to review and to recall important information. Then go through the chapter she is studying and add a list of words that will remind her of the important details that support the theme statement.

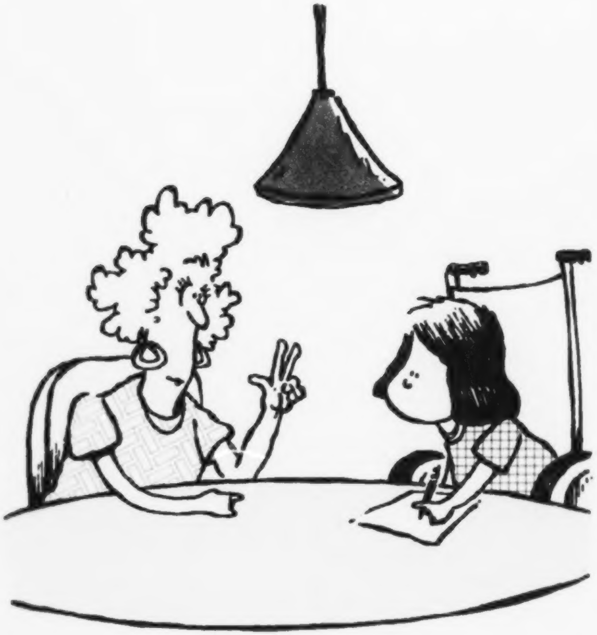
You might think of the letter "T" as a way to visualize these notes, with the main idea statement running across the top of the page and the details extending down the center of the page to form the letter "T." Here is an example from a chapter on pollution.

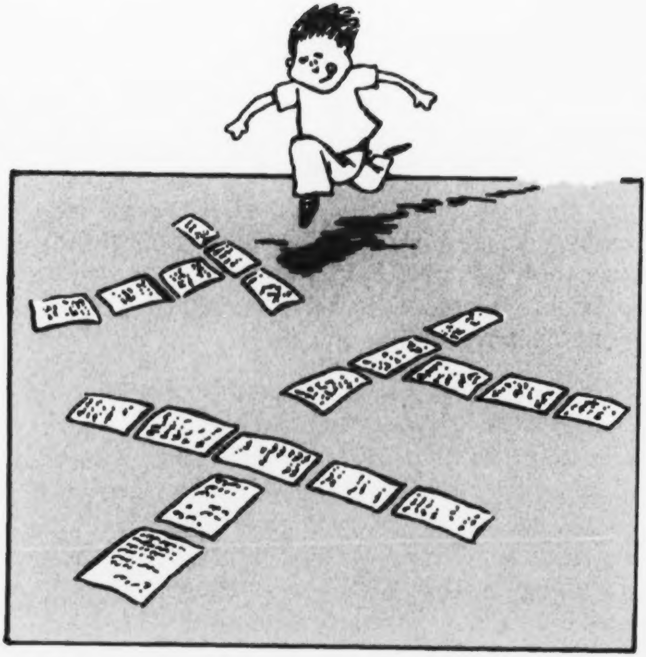
Main idea: Big cities have to find ways to control the major forms of air and water pollution.

DETAILS
smokestacks
tailpipes
wood stoves
pesticides
garbage
dumps
cigarette smoke
chemical spills

This "T" note-taking technique is a very simple way for a child to identify and then to review key ideas on many subjects that he studies.

If your child uses this kind of note-taking system, it will be easier for you to help her review. All you need to do is to ask her to explain the main idea. As she talks about it, you can see if she recalls most of the examples that are listed in the details column. If you want to ask further questions to clarify points, you are free to do so. This kind of review can be finished in just a few minutes, and you don't have to spend a lot of time reading the chapter yourself—unless you want to, of course.





The night before the exam, all your child has to do is to run through the "T" notes quickly to see if he has a good grasp of the main ideas. With this kind of preparation for a test, your child will feel more confident and so will you. When you send your child to school with a hug and a confident smile, he is more likely to take a test with the same sense of confidence. As he leaves for school on test days, say: "You have prepared and you will do just fine. I love you because you are working hard. And I'll love you no matter how you do on the test."

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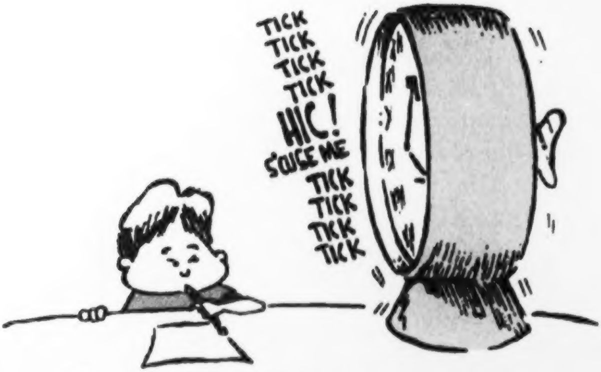
Practice Tests

Besides the general preparation that we just talked about, it is helpful to practice on tests that are similar to the ones your child will take. Football and basketball teams practice their skills daily, but they also have scrimmage games. These are games that are played among teammates as a way of preparing for the games that count. Why not do the same thing with school tests? Taking practice tests not only gives your child practice on material similar to the real test, but also reduces anxiety during testing at school.

Besides, if you and your child review a practice test together, it gives you a chance to point out how tests are written; it gives your child an opportunity to become a little more "testwise." There are all kinds of tests given in school, but the one thing they have in common is the instructions for taking the test. So the first thing your child should do is pay close attention to the directions. Some children find it helpful to underline the key words in the instructions so they don't forget the specific steps they are to take.

Directions



Time may be a factor in some tests. Generally speaking, students should read the test material carefully, but they should also keep moving. If there is a time limit, they need to pace their work so they can complete the test within that limit. If they have an hour to complete the test, they need to ask themselves if they have completed half the work when they have reached the thirty-minute mark. This should be their goal, and they need to keep an eye on the clock to make sure that they are moving at a reasonable pace.

Attitude and Health

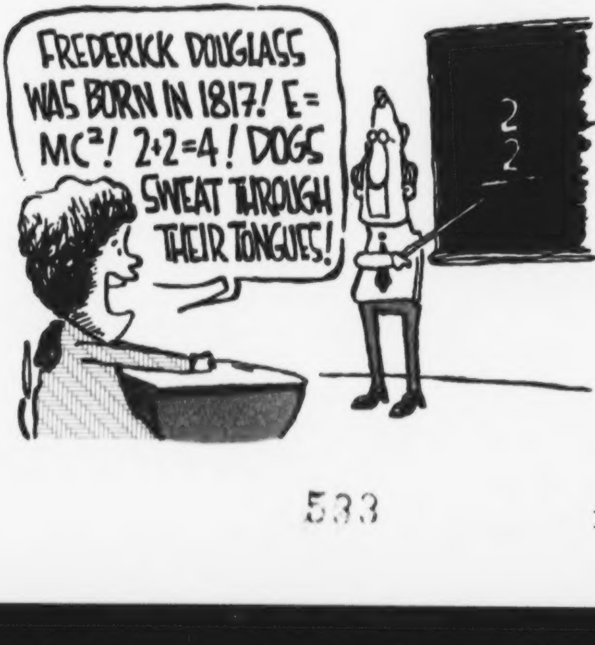
By now, it should be clear to you that your child's mental attitude is just as important as being prepared. By following some of the recommendations that we have made, your child should feel more prepared, and that alone will reduce test anxiety. But your attitude also influences how your child feels. Even if you suffered from test anxiety when you were in school, you should try not to pass along that fear to your children.

Talk to your children about tests as normal activities in life, as events that well-prepared people take in stride. You won't win all the games you play, and you won't ace every test you take. But you should do the best you can and smile when it is over. The language you use about school tests sets the stage for the attitude that your children will carry with them. Reassure them. Remind them that they have prepared, and that they have had a good night's sleep and a good breakfast so their mind and body can function well. These calm reassurances will let your children know that you are not applying undue pressure; that you expect them to do their best, but you don't expect perfection.

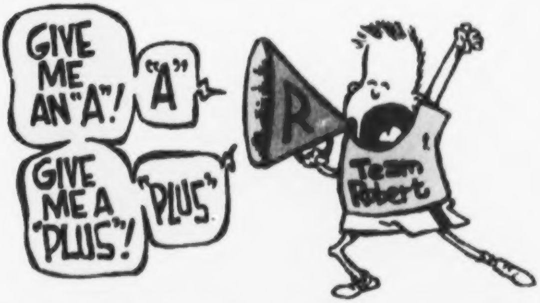
VEGGIE FLAKES

There is no doubt that each of us can learn to do better on the tests that we face in life. Whether in school or on the job, we can improve our performance and therefore our rating if we do the following:

1. Study ahead of time. Good, solid learning takes time and practice. Practice over time gives us a sense of confidence in what we are doing.
2. Focus on the task. Relax and eliminate distractions. Read the directions carefully and follow them methodically. If they are not clear, ask for clarification.
3. Use time wisely. We all operate under time constraints. Work hard on those things that you know well, but keep moving. Remember, a test is meant to take a sample of what a person knows or what a person can do. The teacher doesn't want to know everything that is in the student's mind.


FREDERICK DOUGLASS WAS BORN IN 1817! E=MC²! 2+2=4! DOGS SWEAT THROUGH THEIR TONGUES!
2
2

4. Go to bed early. We all perform better when we have adequate rest and food. To be alert and to retain the energy needed for a test, we need a good night's sleep and a nourishing breakfast to start the day.



5. Be a cheerleader. When there is pressure to perform, we like to have others urging us on. That's why you, as a parent, should send your children to school with a pat on the back or a hug. At the same time, tell your children that they have to keep talking to themselves about the good work that they have done and about the preparation they have made. They have to learn to cheer themselves into doing well on their tests.

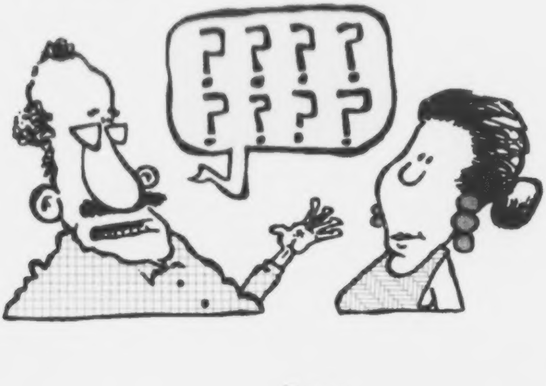
As we have said, tests are a part of life. We should see them as challenges, as opportunities to lift our energies and our spirits, and as ways to grow and to advance. But we also have to keep them in perspective. Tests are merely small samples of what we can do—sometimes a sample that shows a peak performance, sometimes a sample that shows a mediocre performance. No matter, we are still whole persons who have great value.

Parents' Questions about Test Taking

Parents often ask questions concerning children and their education. We will respond to some parents' questions regarding tests and test taking.

Our daughter, who is in kindergarten, has had some learning difficulties. Her teacher has recommended that she be tested by the school psychologist. How can we prepare our daughter for these tests?

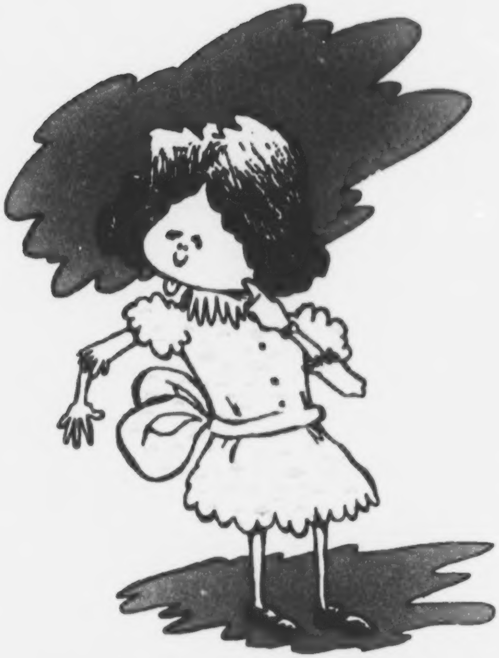
Knowing why your child is being tested is an essential first step. Ask questions such as, "Why is our child being tested?" "How will the test results be used?" "What do you expect to learn?" "Will this test determine if she is eligible for special services?"



Be sure that the entire testing experience has been thoroughly explained to you so you can explain it to your daughter. Discuss with your daughter the reasons for the testing, that is, so teachers will know how to help her in school. This test is not for a report card grade.

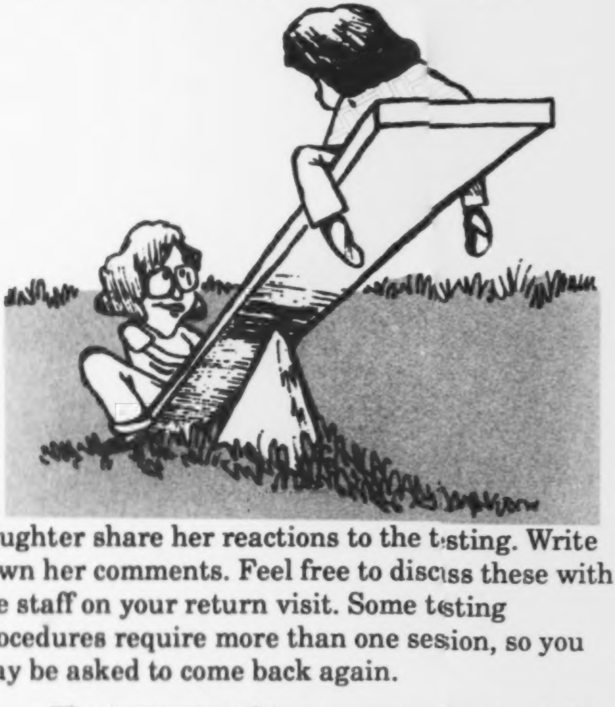
If at all possible, you should be nearby when your daughter is tested. Reassure her that you will be waiting for her when she finishes the test. Explain how many adults will be there, and tell your daughter their names, if possible.

Most children do not have a good sense of time. Wait until the night before the testing is scheduled to discuss it so she doesn't get anxious while waiting to take the test. Most of the testing will seem like playing games to your daughter. For example, she may use building blocks, complete puzzles, string beads, and do a variety of other activities. It might be helpful to describe it just that way—as a series of games so the psychologist can help her in school.



Dress your daughter in clothes that are comfortable. A frilly dress and patent leather shoes are attractive, but will not allow your daughter to have the mobility and comfort needed during the testing. Take along a favorite snack. Children get hungry and hunger pangs can interfere with your child's ability to concentrate. Food can be used after the testing to thank her for her good participation. Favorite toys can also help strange adults break the ice, to initiate conversation, or just to help your child feel more comfortable. Find an old lunch box or bag. Fill it with small toys and ask the psychologist if your daughter can carry it into the testing room.

After the testing is over, make an appointment to discuss the results and what they mean. You might consider a special reward for your daughter immediately following the testing. Lunch at her favorite restaurant, for example, or going to the park to play for awhile. Let your daughter share her reactions to the testing. Write down her comments. Feel free to discuss these with the staff on your return visit. Some testing procedures require more than one session, so you may be asked to come back again.



The important thing to remember about this kind of special testing is that it requires no preparation by your daughter. She will not get a grade. And after the test, you should have your own questions ready for the psychologist so you can understand what the results mean for you and for your child.

Our son becomes nervous and worried around report card time. Although he works hard in school, he only gets average grades and is always concerned when grades come out. What can we do to help him at report card time?

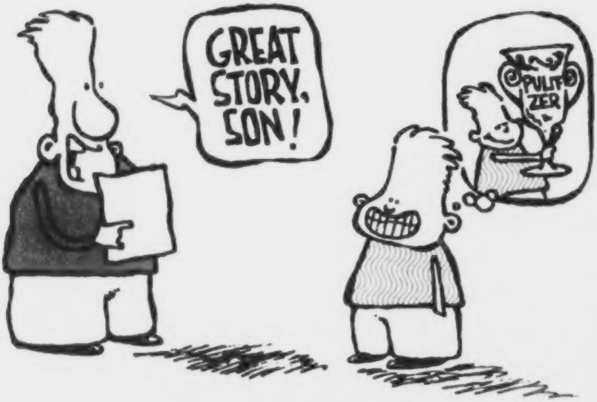
Report card time can be an anxious time for parents and children. Your son may worry that he is not living up to your expectations. You may feel you are not doing your part to help. Why don't you approach report cards in a positive way? Here are some hints on how to do that.

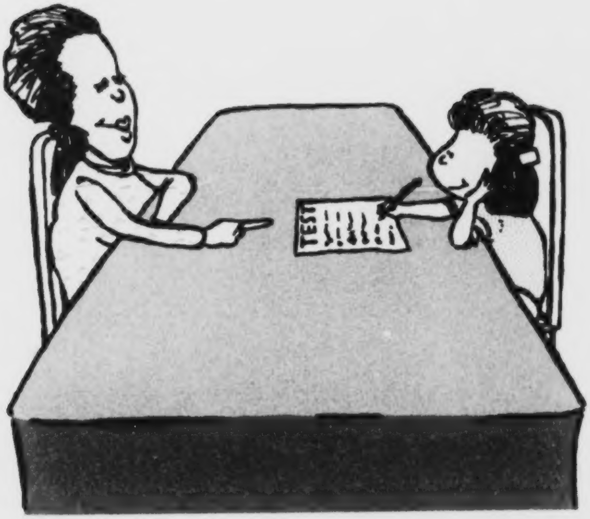
First, prepare for report cards. Just before report cards are due, ask your child, "What do you think your report card will tell us?" Let your son tell you if he expects any problems. Even when children do well in school, they may be nervous about a certain grade. Just talking about it may reduce some anxiety.

REPORT CARD

Second, keep the report card in perspective. The report card is just one small measure of your son's ability. There have been other report cards in the past. And there will be more in the future. A child who gets all "A"s still has more to learn. A child with lower grades still has plenty of strengths. Remind your son of that.

Third, think positively. Use the report card as a chance to take positive action. Find something to praise your son about—his attendance, his attitude, or maybe his improvement in writing stories. Then talk about an area where he can grow. Ask him how he thinks you can help. You may want to set a regular time each day to review vocabulary or spelling words. You may agree to turn off the TV during the study hour to remind him it is time to study. Or, you may decide to talk together with his teacher about ways he can grow as a student.





Is it worth the time to go over tests my daughter brings home from school?

You and your daughter can learn a lot from a test. A test can show where she had difficulty, and perhaps she can explain why. This is especially important in subjects that build on prior learning. For example, children who cannot multiply and divide will not be able to understand fractions.

It helps to talk about how well your daughter used her time during the test. Did she finish? Did she check her work? Did her guessing help? Just talking about ways to manage tests may build confidence for the next time.

By the way, look to see what the teacher has written. Does he make any suggestions? If you have any questions, be sure to contact your daughter's teacher.

If you have questions about tests or test-taking, please write to us, and we will answer them for you. You may find your question in another issue of *Parents and Children Together.*

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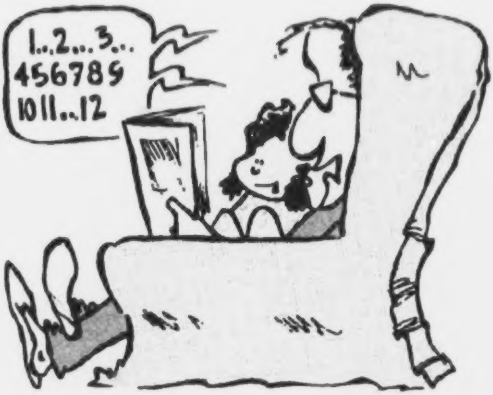
Bloomington, IN 47408-2698

Activities for Fun and Learning

The following activities help children learn while having fun. Select one for you and your child to do together.

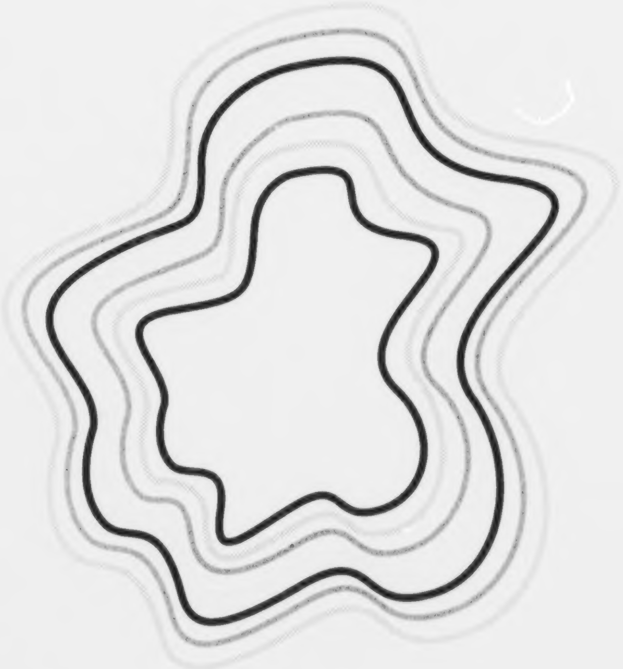
Count on It

- Look at a magazine with your child and ask her to count some of the different things you both see. For example: cookies on a page, flowers in a bouquet, letters in a word, faces in a crowd.



Shape Designs

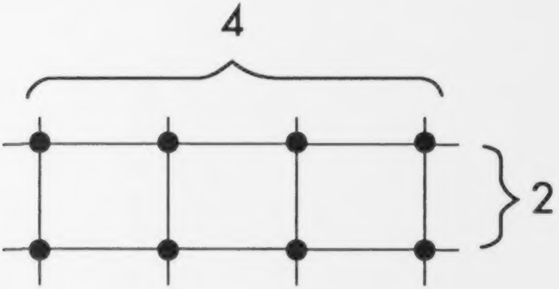
- Help your child improve his hand coordination and control by drawing a shape on a piece of paper for him to surround with larger repetitions of your original. Use a different color for each repetition and a pretty design will result.



544

Dots

- Play a game with your child that will help her learn multiplication. Take turns selecting two numbers. Draw vertical lines equal to the first number, on top of those, draw horizontal lines equal to the second number. Draw dots where the lines intersect. The number of dots are equal to the first number multiplied by the second number.



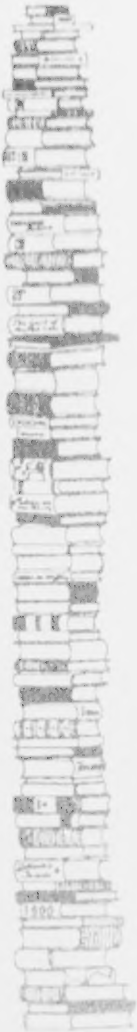
4 x 2 = 8

The End

- Ask your child to make up an ending to this sentence. "On my way to school this morning I heard a soft tinkling sound and suddenly ....." Then encourage him to tell or write a story that stems from his sentence.

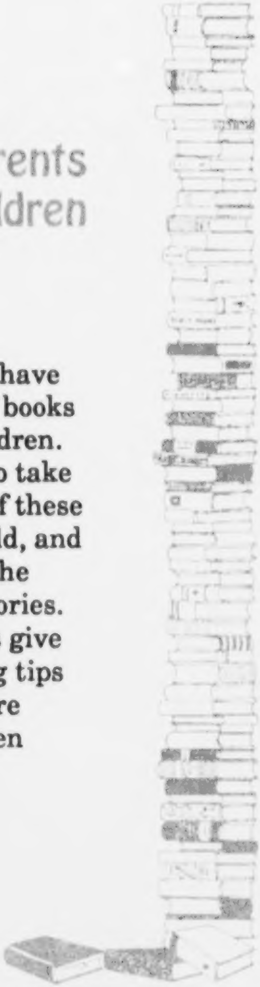
These activities are taken from *Games for Learning,* by Peggy Kaye (The Noonday Press).

* * *



Books for Parents and Children

On pages 26–34 we have put together lists of books for parents and children. We encourage you to take time to read a few of these books with your child, and talk about some of the characters in the stories. Several of the books give practical test-taking tips and some of them are stories about children taking tests.



At the beginning of this issue, we mentioned that Side B of the audio tape contains three stories designed to be read-along stories. You may want to take some time to look ahead at these stories before you read along with your child. It is also important to talk about the story ahead of time.

Before reading the story, talk about the title or things that might happen in the story. Then, after the story is finished, talk about it again. By the way, if in the middle of the story something funny or interesting happens, it's O.K. to stop the tape and discuss the event, or ask your child questions such as "Why do helium balloons float and air balloons don't?" or "Have you ever seen a prairie? What is it like?" These questions make your conversation about the story more meaningful and more valuable.

When you and your child are ready, turn the tape to Side B and listen to the stories as you read along together, or you may read the stories aloud while your child reads along in the booklet.

* * *

Books for Parents

The Grade Booster Guide for Kids, by Roy Kern and Richard Smith. Describes easy-to-follow plans for better grades and test scores. Includes strategies for evaluating study habits, recommendations for test preparation, and tips on taking tests. Discusses schedules, physical health, note taking, eating, sleeping, and how to get help from classmates, teachers, and parents.

Test without Trauma: How to Overcome Test Anxiety and Score Higher on Every Test, by Bette Erwin and Elza Teresa Dinwiddie. Provides an introduction to testing, measurement, and evaluation. Examines the possible causes of test anxiety and suggests ways to deal with and reduce test-related tension. Also gives advice on how to cope with test results.

Dr. Gruber's Essential Guide to Test Taking for Kids, by Gary R. Gruber. Introduces parents to standardized tests and general test-taking skills. Outlines test-taking strategies for vocabulary, sentence completion, reading comprehension, writing, analogies, math problems, quantitative comparison, and rules and shortcuts. Notes ways to help children reduce test anxiety.

Books to Read Together

Ages 4-6

Shapes, by Gwenda Turner (Viking). Presents triangles, squares, circles, rectangles, hearts, and stars as they appear in every day life. Illustrates each figure with a cut-out of the shape.

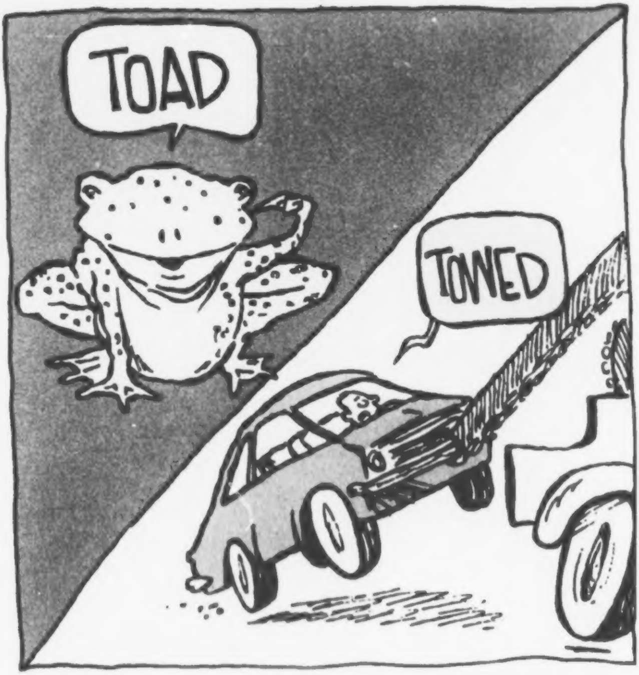
Abracadabra to Zigzag, by Nancy Lecourt (Lothrop). This alphabet book displays funny and unique words and phrases found in spoken English with explanations for each. Includes "dillydally," "itsy bitsy," "rolypoly," "upsy daisy."

Hard to be Six, by Arnold Adoff (Lothrop). A six-year-old boy wants to be older so he can do all of the things his ten-year-old sister can do. He learns from his grandma to be patient and "take time slow, make love count, and pass love on."

Ages 6-8

Help Is on the Way for: Tests, by Marilyn Berry (Childrens Press). Defines what a test is and why tests are important. Outlines ways to prepare and to study for a test, and gives tips for taking different types of tests.

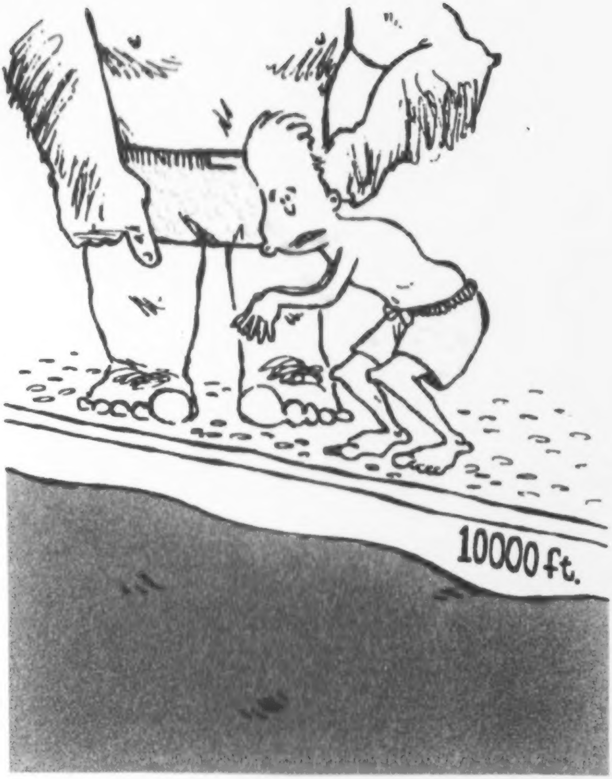
Family Secrets, by Susan Shreve. Includes a short story on cheating in which a boy cheats on a math test and thinks he is a criminal. Then he must face his parents and teacher. After confessing and retaking the test, he no longer feels guilty and unhappy.



Hey, Hay! A Wagonful of Funny Homonym Riddles, by Marvin Terban. (Clarion Books). Presents words that sound the same, but are spelled differently and have different meanings in an entertaining format. Offers a great way to study for a test on homonyms and have fun.

Ages 8-10

Test-taking Strategies, by Judi Kesselman-Turkel and Franklynn Peterson. Explains different kinds of tests and the best strategies to use for taking each. Covers a variety of test formats and subjects.



The Testing of Charlie Hammelman, by Jerome Brooks. Charlie does not want to take a swimming test and seeks the advice of a psychiatrist. Shows some of the tests Charlie must deal with as he matures.

Sixth Grade Can Really Kill You, by Barthe DeClements. Helen is afraid she will never get out of sixth grade because of her reading problems. Describes some of the difficulties kids face in school.

Books for Your Children to Read by Themselves

Ages 4-6

Country Animals, by Lucy Cousins (Tambourine). A board book containing drawings of rural wildlife. The name for each animal is also given.

More First Words / My Birthday Party, by Margaret Miller (HarperCollins). Uses photographs and simple text to show the different things one may see or do at a birthday party.

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I See, by Rachel Isadora (Greenwillow). Large print and easy to read vocabulary display things a young child might see in a typical day.

Ages 6-8

See You in Second Grade! by Miriam Cohen. While this group of first-graders is enjoying their end-of-the-year picnic, they think about the great year they have had. After a few moments to remember, they are anxious to begin second grade the following year.

The True Francine, by Marc Brown. Francine and Muffy are best friends, until Muffy cheats on a math test and Mr. Ratburn blames Francine. Finally Muffy decides to be a loyal friend and tell the truth.

What to Do When Your Mom or Dad Says....: Get Good Grades!" by Joy Wilt Berry (Childrens Press). Defines the purpose of tests and grades. Presents practical skills that will enable students to get the most out of tests and grades.

Ages 8-10

How to Be School Smart: Secrets of Successful Schoolwork, by Elizabeth James and Carol Barkin. Describes successful organization of study space and time, different learning styles, ways to handle homework, and tips for taking tests.

How to Sharpen Your Study Skills, by Sigmund Kalina. Gives practical advice on taking notes and tests. Includes tips to help students develop a better memory, use their library, and do homework.

SKILL
SHARPENER

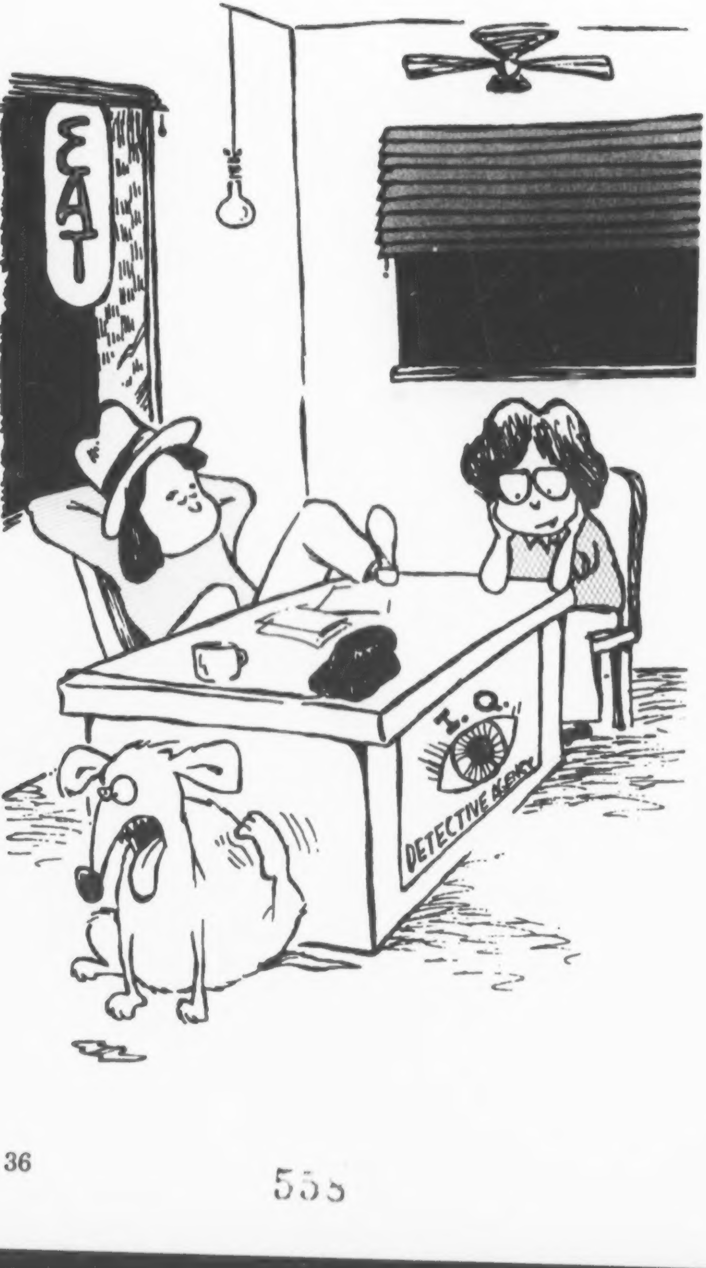
Josh: A Boy with Dyslexia, by Caroline Janover (Waterfront Books). Shows how important testing for learning differences can be in a child's education. Presents a young boy with dyslexia and the problems he has in school and everyday life. Also includes information on dyslexia and organizations that deal with learning differences.

Magazines

Also ask your librarian for the following magazines for children:

Cricket
Current Health
Highlights for Children
Faces
Odyssey
Shoe Tree
Venture
Your Big Backyard

Read-along Stories



EAT
I.Q.
DETECTIVE AGENCY

The Burglar Alarm Case

by Ann Devendorf

Things to Do *before* Reading the Story

This story is about a person who did not understand the things that were happening to her. Talk about times in your own life when you "jumped to a conclusion" about something before thinking about what was really going on, and then found out the truth later. As you read, see if Rita's experience was anything like your own.

It was a hot summer night, and the chirp of crickets was rapid. Inez's dog Paladin panted on the floor of the I.Q. Detective Agency Office.

"We had no detective business today," said Quentella to Inez. "All we did was go to town with Rita and buy a bouquet of balloons for her mother's birthday and take them to her office."

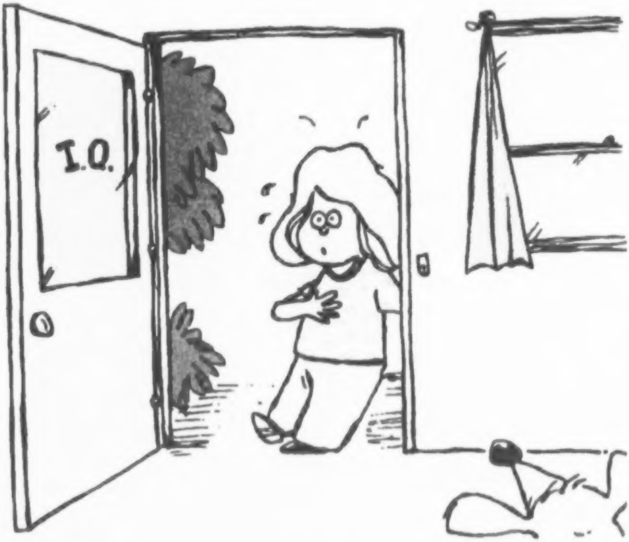
"Yes," said Inez, "that didn't take any brainwork."

Quentella looked out of the office door, "The street lights just came on," she said, "and here comes Rita down the street."

"Help!" called Rita. "Help!"

Paladin stopped panting and jumped to his feet.

"What is it? What's wrong?" called Quentella.



"The burglar alarm system at my house sounded," said Rita, leaning against the door jamb and gasping for breath. "It means there are burglars in my mother's office. The alarm is set to go off at the house and the police station."

"Where is your mother?" asked Inez.

"Not at the office," said Rita. "She's visiting friends. Come on! Bring Paladin! Let's go!"

"What kind of an alarm is it?" asked Inez.

"Infra-red," said Rita. "When someone crosses the invisible beams, the alarm goes off. This time, the alarm shows there must be many burglars in the office because the beams have been crossed several times."

"I see," said Inez, frowning as she thought.

"Come on!" cried Rita. "Are you afraid to go?"

"No," said Inez, "I am not afraid, but I don't think there are any burglars."

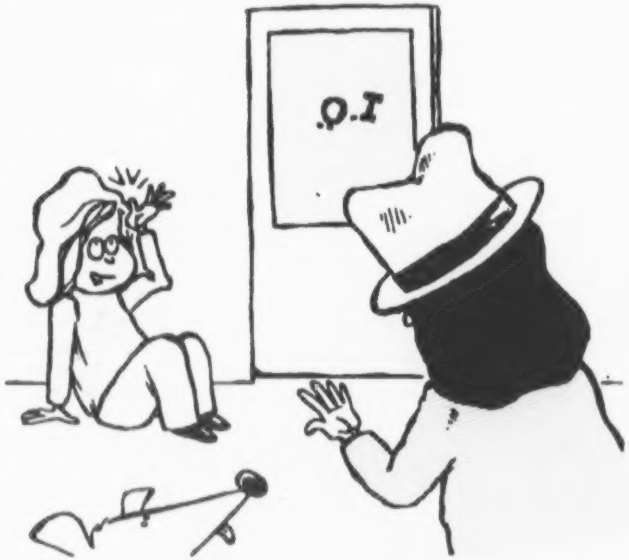
"WHAT?" said Rita.

"All that's there is a bunch of helium balloons," said Inez.

Rita frowned. "I know there are balloons there. I bought them!"

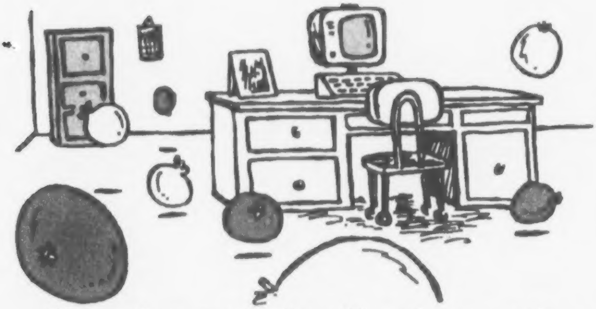
"The balloons are losing their helium. As they lose helium, they move and bounce across the office, crossing the light beams."

Rita slumped in relief and sank to the doorstep. "That's probably it," she said. "I've blown up a lot of balloons and let them go. The air escaping makes them fly around."



"It's fun to do that," said Quentella.

"Yes," agreed Inez, "but let's go and meet the police."



When they got to the office, they met the policemen, went into the office, and switched on the light. They saw the colorful balloons floating and bouncing lazily around the office.

"Woof!" said Paladin, backing out the door.

"He's tangled with balloons before," said Inez, "and he doesn't like them."

"Some burglars," said one of the policemen.

"No need to take them into the station and book them," said Quentella, laughing.

"I'll take them home and lock them up," said Rita with a grin.

Things to Do *after* Reading the Story

You probably have had or seen balloons filled with helium. Talk about why these balloons are able to float instead of falling to the ground like balloons filled with air. Think of other things that might have triggered Rita's burglar alarm besides the balloons that were slowly leaking their helium.

The Lunch Box

by Marilyn Kratz

Things to Do *before* Reading the Story

Think of some of the special things you have taken to school. How did you feel when you had something that none of the other students had? Talk about your favorite objects, like toys, books, or clothing, and about why they are special to you.

"I'm ready, Grandpa," said Peter, but he didn't move from the washstand.

Grandpa put his hands on Peter's shoulders. "Your ma and pa often talked about this day—your first day of school," he said. "They wanted you to be an educated man, maybe a lawyer or a doctor."

Peter looked down. "I would rather stay home and learn to be a farmer like you."

Grandpa sighed. "I'm not much of an example for you, lad."

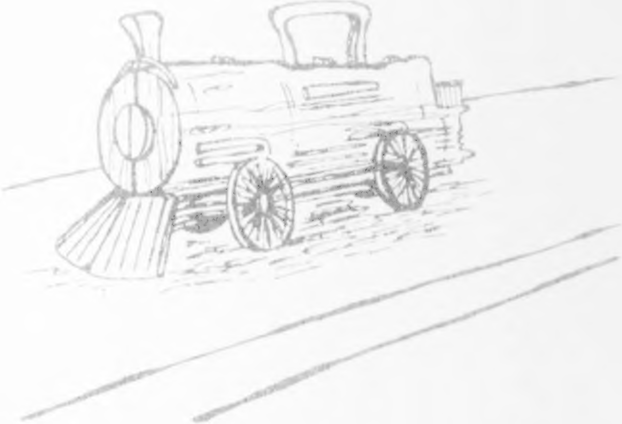
"It's not your fault," Peter spoke up quickly. "We just happened to settle here in dry time. You're a good farmer—a good carver, too."

"Carving is only for pleasure," said Grandpa, looking out the door of the small sod house at the parched prairie beyond. "If we don't get a better crop next year, we won't make it through the winter. It'll be hard enough this year."

"I could get a job in the settlement instead of going to school," said Peter.

"Now, I don't want to hear such nonsense," said Grandpa. He went to the cupboard and took something out of it. "I made this for you."

Peter gasped. "Grandpa! It's beautiful!"



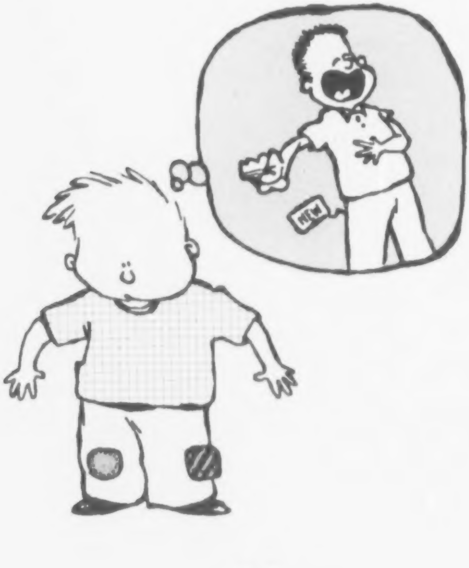
Grandpa had carved Peter a lunch box which looked like a train engine. Every detail was perfect, from the cowcatcher at the front to the engineer's cabin at the rear. The wheels even turned.

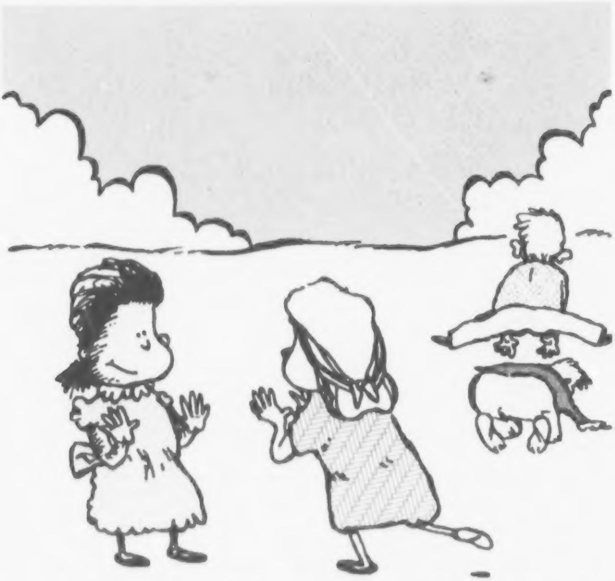
"There's honey bread inside," said Grandpa, grinning at the surprised look on Peter's face.

"It's wonderful, Grandpa. Thank you," said Peter.

"Well, it won't do to be tardy the first day," said Grandpa. And, for the first time, he extended his hand to Peter instead of giving him a hug and kiss. "Have a good day, Peter."

Peter felt a queer tightness in his stomach as he shook Grandpa's hand. Then he took a deep breath and stepped outside. As Peter walked toward the settlement, he tried to think of excuses to turn back. He began to worry. Would there be a desk for him? Would the bigger boys laugh at the patches on his pants?





Peter's steps slowed as he approached the schoolhouse, and he stopped to watch the children play.

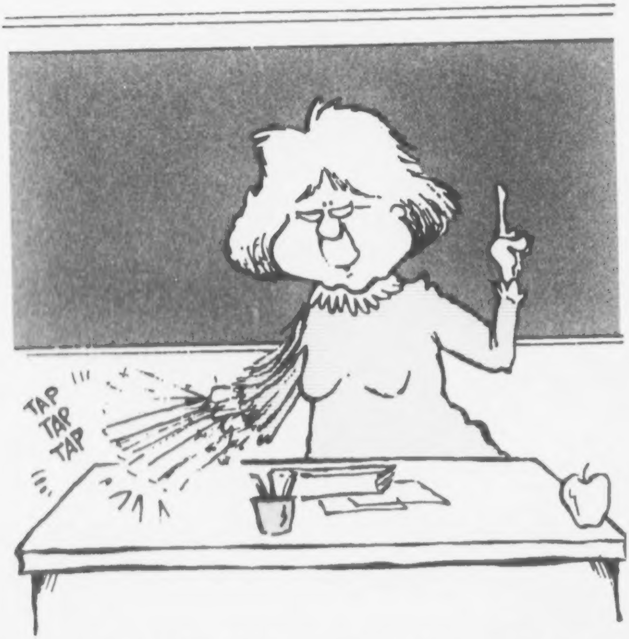
A boy about his size ran up to him. "Want to play 'pump-pump-pull-away' with us?" he asked.

Peter just stood there, wishing his feet didn't feel so heavy. The boy looked at him a moment, then rejoined the game. Peter was relieved to hear the school bell ring. He went in with the others.

The children placed their lunches on a shelf along the back wall. Most of the children had brought their lunches in shiny tin pails. A few had theirs tied in cloths. Not one had a carved lunch box like Peter's. Suddenly, Peter felt embarrassed about his. He slid it way back on the shelf where it wouldn't show.

The teacher rapped on her desk with a ruler.

"Good morning, boys and girls," she said. "I'm Miss Swenson. Our first task will be to plan our seating arrangement. All who are in the third reader, please sit at the back of the room."



Most of the big boys and girls moved back, two children sharing each desk. Miss Swenson seated those in the second reader in front of them.

"Now, those in the beginning reader will sit up front," said Miss Swenson.

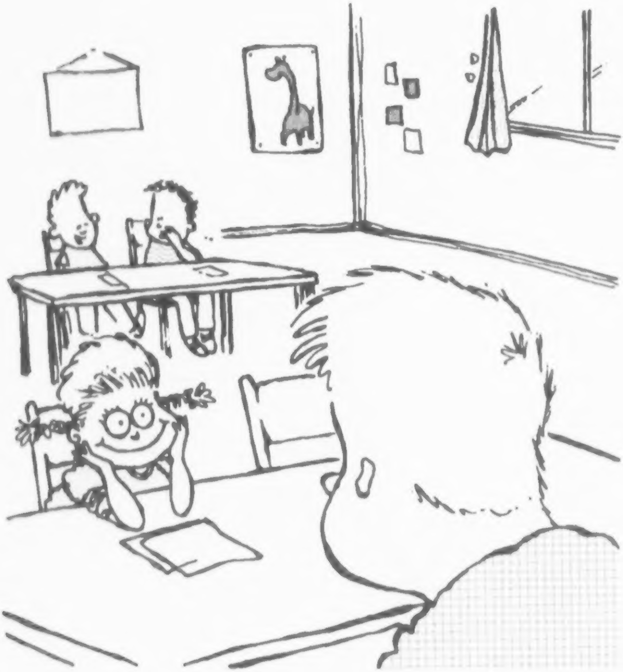
The smaller children scrambled to find seats. Then only Peter was left standing.

"What reader are you in?" asked Miss Swenson.

"I don't have a reader," Peter said. He felt his ears turn red.

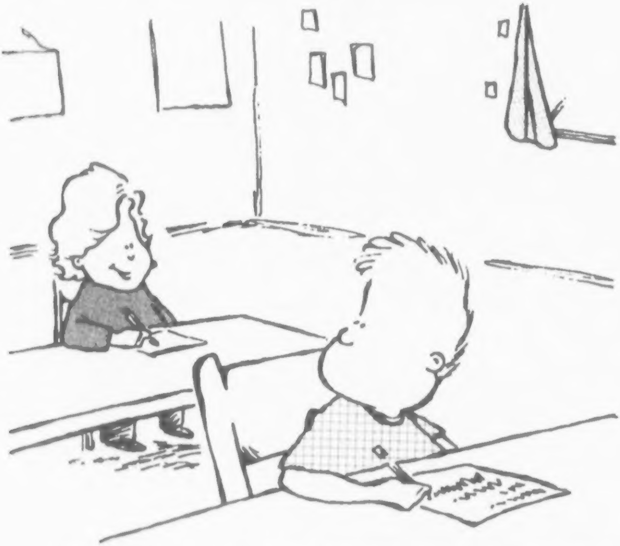
"You may use this one," said Miss Swenson, handing him a beginning reader. "There's only one seat left at the front." She indicated a desk already occupied by a little girl. "You may share that desk with Molly."

Peter heard some snickers as he took his seat. He didn't return Molly's friendly smile.



Peter listened carefully as Miss Swenson assigned the lesson. He copied the letters exactly as she wrote them, and he quickly learned their names and sounds.

"Very good, Peter," said Miss Swenson. "You'll soon be in the second reader."

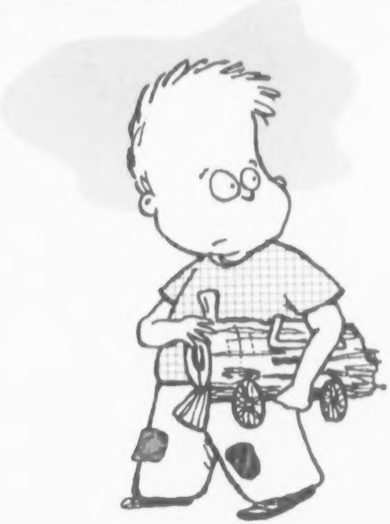


Peter glanced back. Jonathan, the boy who had invited him to play, grinned at him. Peter hoped he would be able to share a desk with him soon.

The morning passed quickly and pleasantly for Peter. Then Miss Swenson announced, "Lunch time."

Suddenly, Peter felt embarrassed again as he remembered his beautifully carved lunch box.

"Shall we sit together to eat lunch?" Jonathan asked Peter after they had taken their lunches off the shelf.



Peter hesitated. Then he followed Jonathan to his desk, carrying his fancy lunch box under his arm. As soon as he set it on Jonathan's desk, his new friend exclaimed, "What's that?"

"My lunch box," Peter said, hunching down in the seat, afraid that Jonathan would make fun of it. "Where did you get it?" asked Jonathan.

"My grandpa made it."

"It's really nice!" said Jonathan. "May I touch it?"

"Yes," said Peter, wishing Jonathan wouldn't talk so loudly.

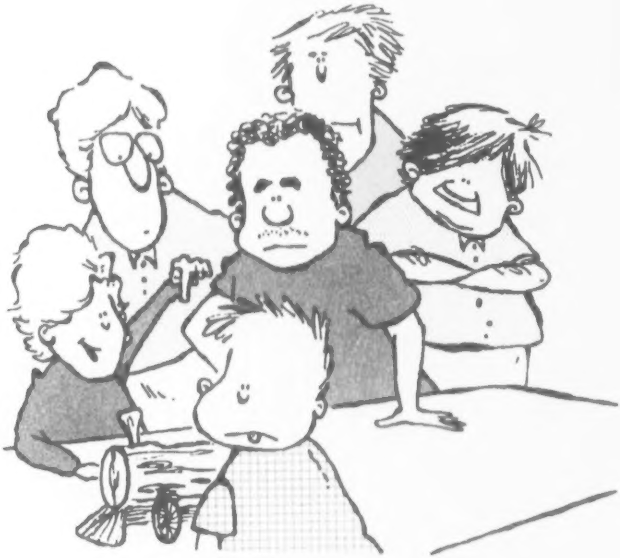
"Bob!" Jonathan called to his older brother. "Come look at this."

Several big boys crowded around Jonathan's desk. Peter wished more than ever that he had stayed home.

"Do the wheels really turn?" asked Bob.

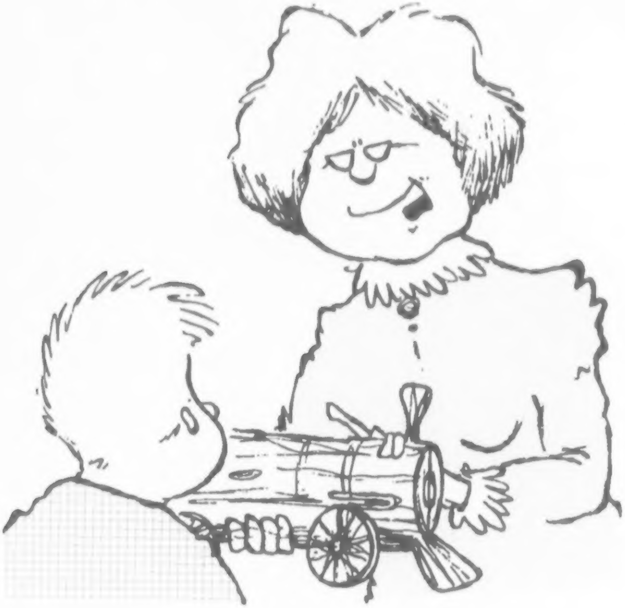
"Has your grandpa made any others?" asked another boy.

"Would he make one for me?" asked another.



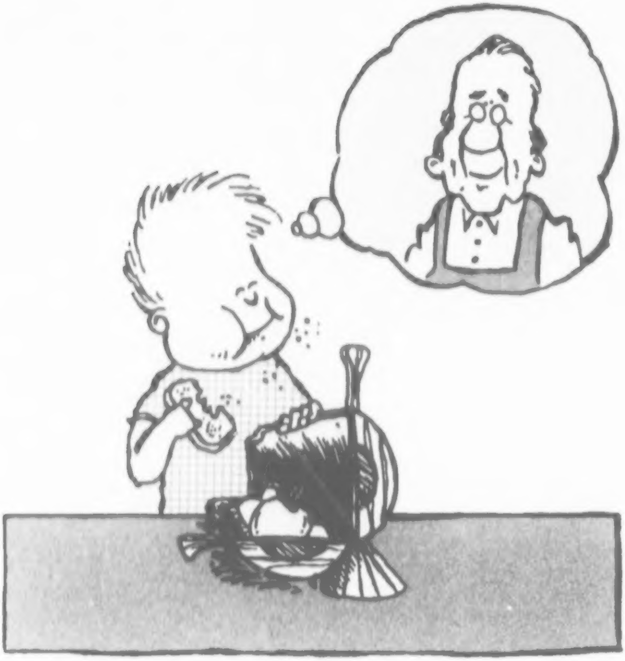
Miss Swenson came to see what was causing all the excitement. She examined the carved lunch box.

"Your grandfather is a talented carver," she said. "Do you think he would like to make some for my father to sell in his general store?"



"I don't know," Peter said, trying to think. He knew Grandpa loved to carve. Now that the harvest was in, he had spare time. And the extra money would help get them through the winter. "I'll ask him," Peter said.

When the others returned to their desks, Jonathan said, "I would like to meet your grandpa some time."



Peter grinned as he took the honey bread from his lunch box. "I'm going to be just like him," he said. "And he's going to be proud of me when I tell him that I like going to school."

Things to Do *after* Reading the Story

Peter felt afraid on his first day of school. How did you feel when you first went to school? Talk about times when you were worried or afraid about doing something. Then talk about how you went ahead and did them anyway, and how it felt to be brave.

The Girl Who Brought Down the Wind

by Constance Veatch Toney

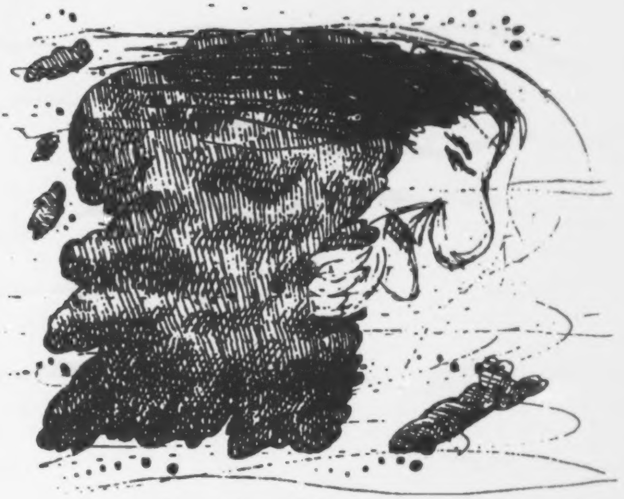
Things to Do *before* Reading the Story

The wind is a powerful force in nature. That is why people in other cultures often think of it as a god or goddess. Talk about words like "twister" that describe the wind and its powerful effects.

One spring long ago, the wind roared down from his western palace to play with the earth. It was his favorite game. But that day, for some reason, the wind was angry.

Instead of sailing gently through the trees, he ripped them from the ground and flung them about. Instead of whistling merrily through the wind chimes, he tore off roofs, flattened temples, and scattered the newly planted rice shoots.

The people were terrified and called out fearful curses against the wind. This angered the wind even more.



"I will show them!" he howled. "When I have finished here, I will stay in my palace. Let them see just how much they need me." The wind pulled his dark cloak of clouds about him and stormed back to his palace. And there he stayed.

The people in Cherry Blossom's province gave thanks when they saw the wind departing. For days afterward they cleaned, gathered, chopped, and rebuilt. Cherry Blossom helped her father repair their little house. She went with her mother to search for rice seedlings and fruit trees to replant. She watched over her baby brother and thought about the wind and all he had done.

As weeks passed, the people noticed something strange. While they rebuilt their houses, no gentle breeze came to cool their sweating brows. When they replanted their rice fields, no playful winds rippled the water.

"Why is it so hot, Father?" Cherry Blossom asked one day.

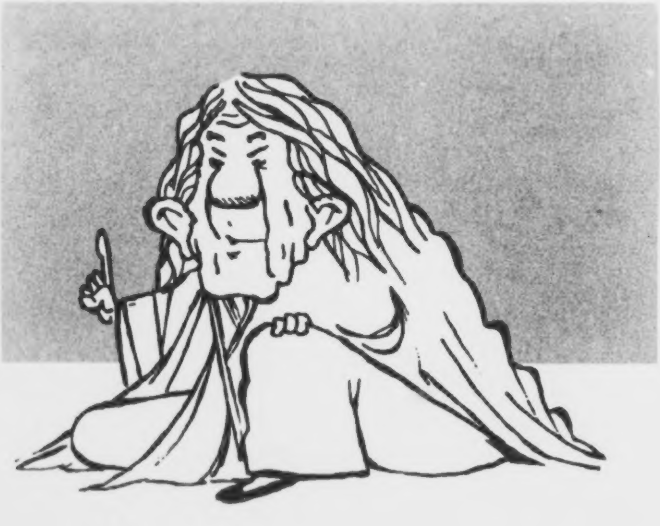
"The wind has gone elsewhere," her father replied, wiping his forehead.

"Where is the wind?" she asked her mother.

"I fear we drove it away with our curses," her mother said with a wave of her fan.

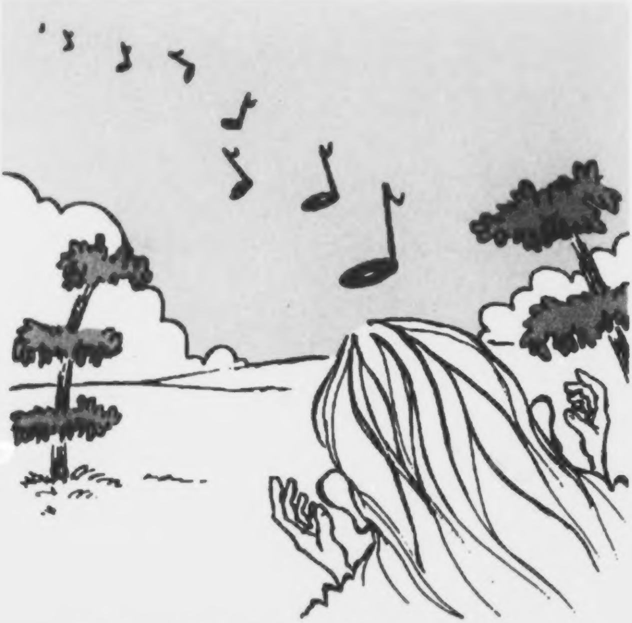
"How can we bring back the wind?" Cherry Blossom asked.

"Perhaps Wind Singer can tell us," her father answered. The people gathered around the old man called Wind Singer. He had more wrinkles than a dried plum, and his hair hung down like cobwebs. He was very wise.



"Sing down the wind for us," the people begged.

"I have called the wind for many years," he said. "I will try again." Wind Singer's voice sailed out into the air like a thin note from a bamboo flute. It drifted along the ground and then fell silent.

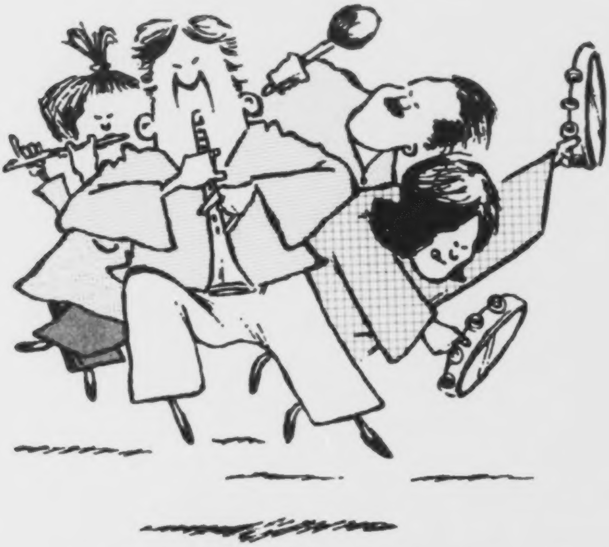


The people sighed and waited for the first breath of wind. Nothing happened.

"The wind is very angry with us," the old man said. "I do not think he will return until we apologize."

"But he hurt us and ruined our houses!" one man cried.

"Nevertheless," Wind Singer cautioned, "the wind is like a spoiled child who must be always entertained. We must coax him back."



So the people tried many things. Some went to the temple and beat upon gongs and cymbals. Others blew silver flutes and whistles. The wind listened but sat unmoved in his palace. Great bonfires burned in the night. The people hoped the wind might see the flames and come to play with them. He watched the stars instead.

Cherry Blossom saw all these things and thought about them. Remembering Wind Singer's words, she went to her father. "If the wind is like a child, perhaps we should make him a toy to play with," she said.

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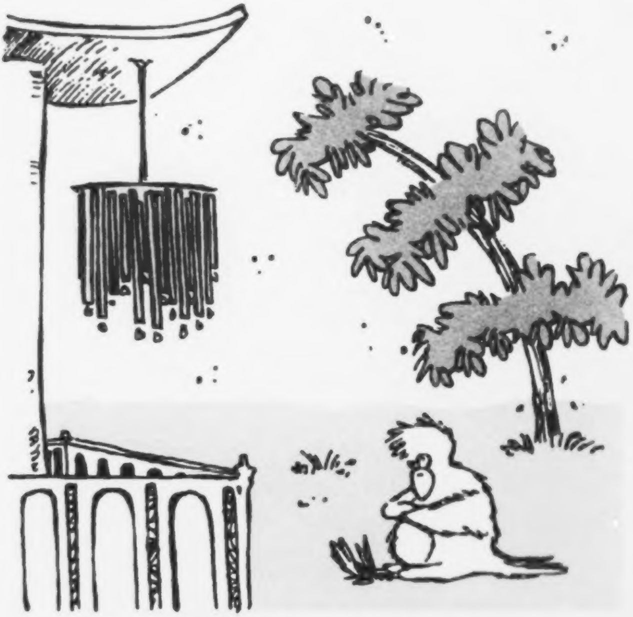
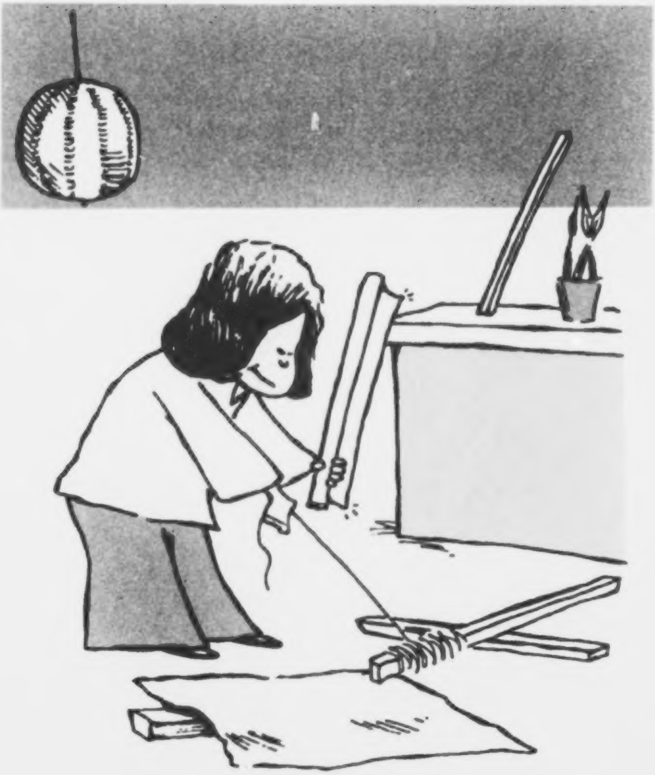
Her father smiled and shook his head. "What can a girl know of these things?" he asked. But he told his neighbor who told others. The people laughed at Cherry Blossom and her idea, but Wind Singer sat and thought.

The days grew hot. No wind blew in rain clouds, so the rice fields slowly dried, and the young seedlings withered. The trees drooped, and the birds could not fly. The wind chimes in every window were silent. A great, hot hush settled over the province.



At last, Wind Singer came to Cherry Blossom's house. "Make a toy that will bring down the wind for us," he said.

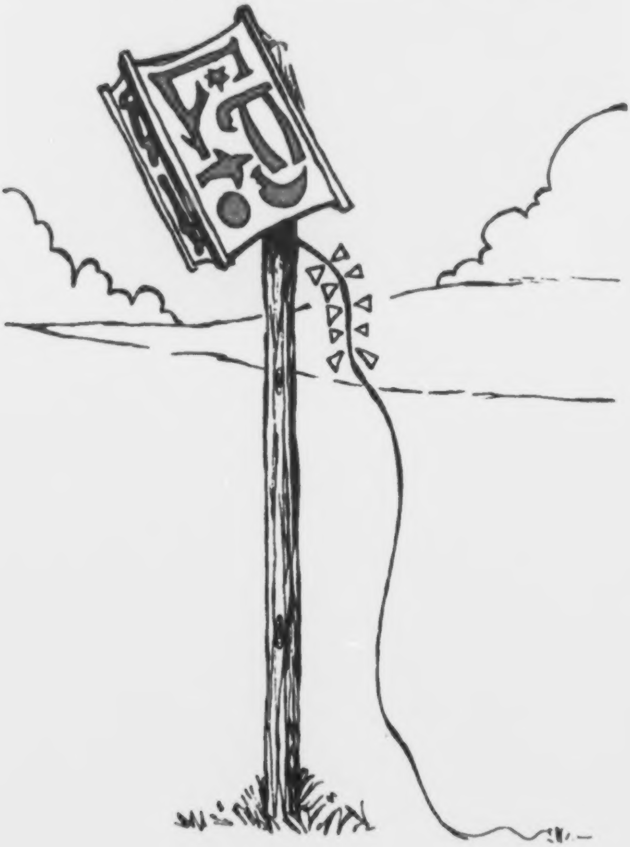


Cherry Blossom took paper and carefully cut out a strange shape. She painted a beautiful design over the paper, using all the colors she thought the wind would enjoy. Then she sewed the paper to thin wooden slats and added a tail of colored cloth. She tied a long string to it and carried the wonderful toy outside and fixed it to a long pole.

The people gathered about Cherry Blossom and her strange creation. She ignored their snickering and watched the tail.

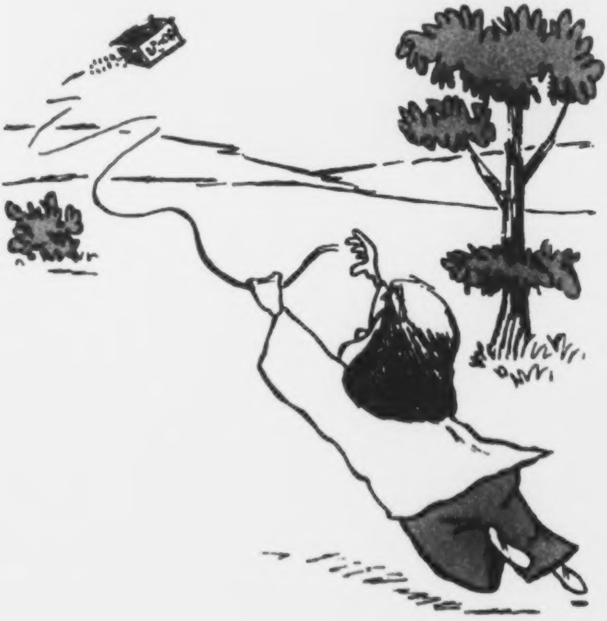
Was it moving ever so slightly?

From his western palace, the wind was surveying Cherry Blossom's province when he saw the brightly painted thing on the pole. Silently, he sailed out to look at it. Gently he puffed at its tail. Why, it was only cloth! He could easily blow it any way he wished. First to the left, then to the right. It swished like a cat's tail. The wind chuckled.



Next the wind pressed against the beautiful toy. It crackled and shifted easily on the pole. Why, it's only paper! he thought. How often had he tossed paper up into the sky and chased it for miles? But this paper was different. It was beautiful and delightfully shaped. It would be much more fun to lift this pretty scrap up into the sky and play with it.

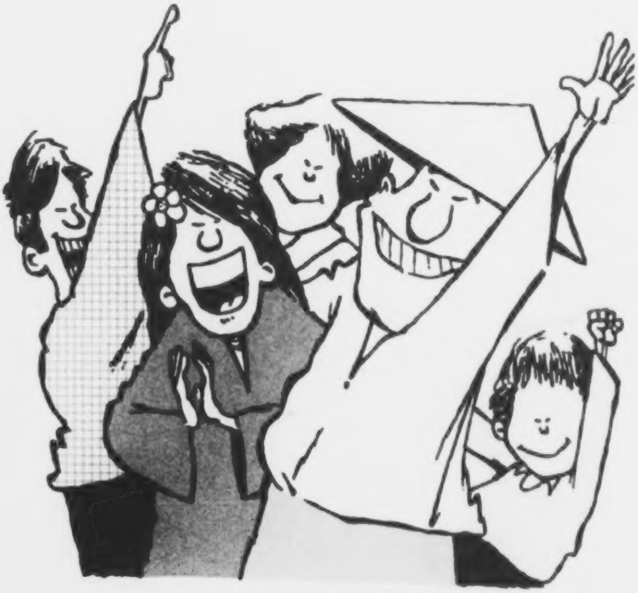
Softly at first, then with stronger gusts, the wind lifted his new toy up off the pole and carried it above the tree tops. At just the right moment, Cherry Blossom leaned forward and caught the string she had tied to the paper. The people held their breath.



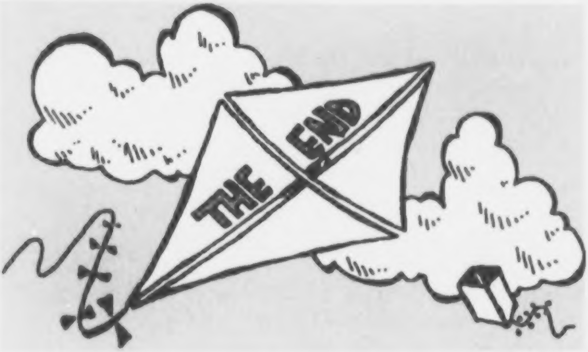
Suddenly, all about them, the trees sprang to new life, their leaves clapping in the breeze. Wind chimes sang from every window, and the birds rose up on eager wings to dance with the wind.

The people cheered and laughed. "Cherry Blossom!" they chanted. "The girl who brought down the wind!"

Cherry Blossom only smiled and held tightly to the string, while high above her the wind tugged and played with his pretty new toy.



Ever after, the children in the province made bright paper toys like Cherry Blossom's so that the wind wouldn't forget to come down from his western palace. And even today, in all parts of the world, children still bring down the wind every spring in the same special way.



Things to Do *after* Reading the Story

Cherry Blossom thought of the wind as if it were a child. How do you think of the wind? Talk about your ideas. Come up with other ways that Cherry Blossom might have "brought down the wind," besides kite flying. For example, she could have used a windmill. Talk about how a windmill works. Describe how a windmill could have brought down the wind from the palace.

We hope you have had fun
with these stories!

Books of Special Interest to Parents

How Can I Prepare My Young Child for Reading? by Paula C. Grinnell. Presents ideas to assist parents in preparing their children for reading. Focuses on children from birth through kindergarten.

You Can Help Your Young Child with Writing, by Marcia Baghban. Suggests methods parents can use to help develop their children's writing at home. Offers writing and reading activities.

Beginning Literacy and Your Child, by Steven B. Silvern and Linda R. Silvern. Recommends ways parents can participate in the development of their children's literacy. Provides activities for talking, reading, writing, and listening.

Helping Your Child Become a Reader, by Nancy L. Roser. Provides suggestions for parents to help them encourage their children to read. Offers several practical activities for parents.

Creating Readers and Writers, by Susan Mandel Glazer. Suggests parents (1) encourage the use of language, (2) build positive attitudes toward reading, writing, and speaking, and (3) demonstrate the purposes of literacy. Includes book suggestions classified by age groups.

You Can Encourage Your High School Student to Read, by Jamie Myers. Offers practical ideas parents can use to encourage their teenagers to read more. Shows how reading can serve adolescents' needs and presents future needs that reading can fulfill.

Your Child's Vision Is Important, by Caroline Beverstock. Discusses how vision affects school work, how different eye problems affect vision, and how to spot vision problems. Includes suggestions for dealing with vision difficulties.

Encouraging Your Junior High Student to Read, by John L. Shefelbine. Discusses why reading for pleasure is important. Suggests how to find time for reading, gather a variety of reading materials, and help a child who has difficulty reading.

Cost per booklet is $1.75

Produced and distributed in cooperation with the
International Reading Association

Remedial Reading for Elementary School Students

by Carolyn McGowen

This collection of lesson plans includes strategies for content matter, practical teaching suggestions, effective classroom techniques, and leading ideas that further thoughtful teaching. Uses games and reading activities to stimulate imagination, develop reading skills, and strengthen comprehension. For grade school students with reading difficulties.

T05; $12.95

Reading Strategies for the Primary Grades

by Kim & Claudia Katz

Enables teachers to accomplish a prime goal of elementary school: making certain of basic literacy. A storehouse of clever ideas—using rhymes, pictures, and students' experiences to begin reading, writing, and building vocabulary and comprehension; story, poem, and semantic mapping; family stories, response logs, oral reading, Whole Language, and much more.

T08; $12.95

Helping Parents Understand the Stages of Their Child's Reading Development

by Gail Londergan

This annotated bibliography draws on resources in the ERIC database. It lists materials that help parents assist their children to become readers. The three states of growth in reading achievement—early childhood, beginning reading, and the development of reading enjoyment and good reading habits—are all covered in this FAST Bib (Focused Access to Selected Topics).

F50; $1.00

Parent Involvement in Elementary Language Arts: A Program Model

by Marge Simic

This ERIC Digest, a bibliographical essay based on sources in the ERIC database, is a focused discussion on integrating parent involvement programs into the language arts curriculum. Discusses dimensions of involvement, as well as specific examples of how parents were involved in a literature-based program in the language arts curriculum.

D60; $1.00

101 Ideas to Help Your Child Learn to Read and Write

by Mary and Richard Behm

Offers 101 practical suggestions for parents to help their children develop reading and writing skills in the home environment. Ideas include bedtime activities, using television, travel, games, and many other ways to incorporate literacy into the home.

G08; $6.50

Special Collection: Family Involvement includes:

Parent Involvement in Elementary Language Arts: A Program Model Helping Parents Understand the Stages of Their Child's Reading Development (mentioned on the previous page) and the following FAST Bibs and Digests:

Listening: Are We Teaching It...?
How to "Read" Television...
Teaching Children to Appreciate Literature
Storytelling: An Art for All
Media Ethics...
The Supreme Court on Hazelwood...
Communication Apprehension
Sex Stereotypes in Children's Literature
Reading Aloud to Students
Teenage Television...
Religious Broadcasting
The Right to Read: Censorship
Reading and the Elderly
Ethnography and Personal Narrative...

SC4; $5.95

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______Discipline and Learning (C06; $7)
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A Tip for Educators

Prepare a tote bag that contains the current issue of *Parents and Children Together* and a couple of books that we recommend in our book columns. Have students take the tote bags home so that parents can use the audio magazine and also read some of the books that have been placed in the tote bag. Some schools supply a tape recorder for the tote bag, and others offer an incentive for the prompt return of the materials.

Parents and Children Together is an audio magazine developed to promote family literacy.

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Submissions Policy for Stories and Articles for Parents and Children Together

Stories for Children and Parents:

1. Make the story fun for children—your primary audience. The adult reading along will enjoy the story if the child does.
2. Make sure that your story is acceptable to parents. We do not want parents to reject the story because it is inappropriate for their children. Writing a story that is interesting to children and at the same time pleasing to parents is a big challenge.
3. Your story should be no longer than eight double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.
4. Correct grammar and syntax are important. For the most part, we choose to model correct standard English.
5. Be careful about the vocabulary you use in your story. Rule out really long and difficult-to-pronounce words. Use "plain" English, when you can—words that have English roots rather than French or Latin ones.
6. Make your stories gender inclusive. Do not use sexist terminology or ideas. Our stories must be interesting to both boys and girls.
7. You may illustrate your own story, but the illustrations must be line drawings in pen and ink only. The drawings must be able to be scanned, so too much detail will not work.

Articles for Parents:

1. Articles should contain practical information and helpful strategies. Anecdotes and other experiences modeling useful learning methods are particularly desirable.
2. Your article should be no longer than four double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.

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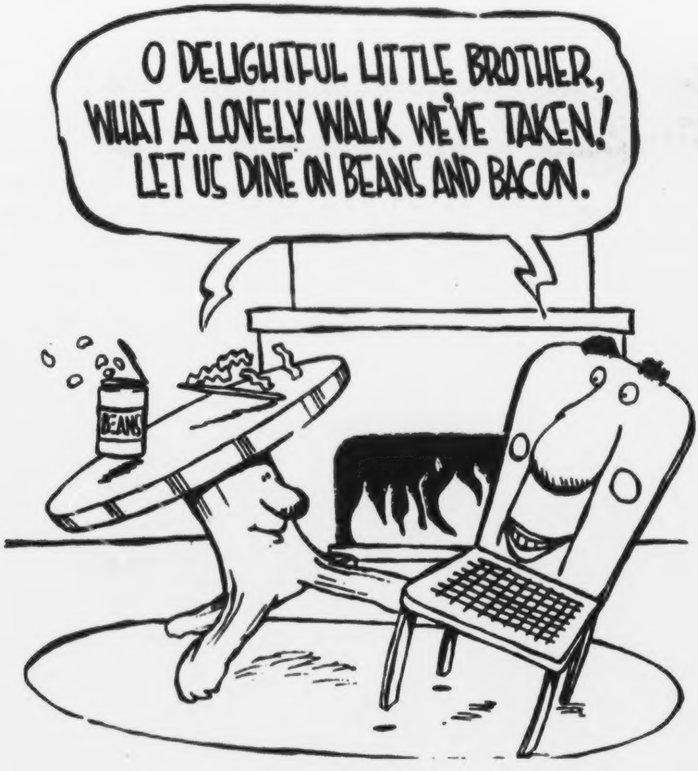
February 1992

Parents and Children Together

Appreciating Poetry


O DELIGHTFUL LITTLE BROTHER,
WHAT A LOVELY WALK WE'VE TAKEN!
LET US DINE ON BEANS AND BACON.
BEANS

Read-along Poems:

Nursery Rhymes
The Table and the Chair
Annabel Lee
The Walrus and the Carpenter

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This booklet has a companion audio tape on "Appreciating Poetry." Occasionally there are directions on the tape that do not appear in the booklet or headings in the booklet that aren't spoken on the tape.

QUOTH THE REAGAN...
RAVEN! RAVEN!

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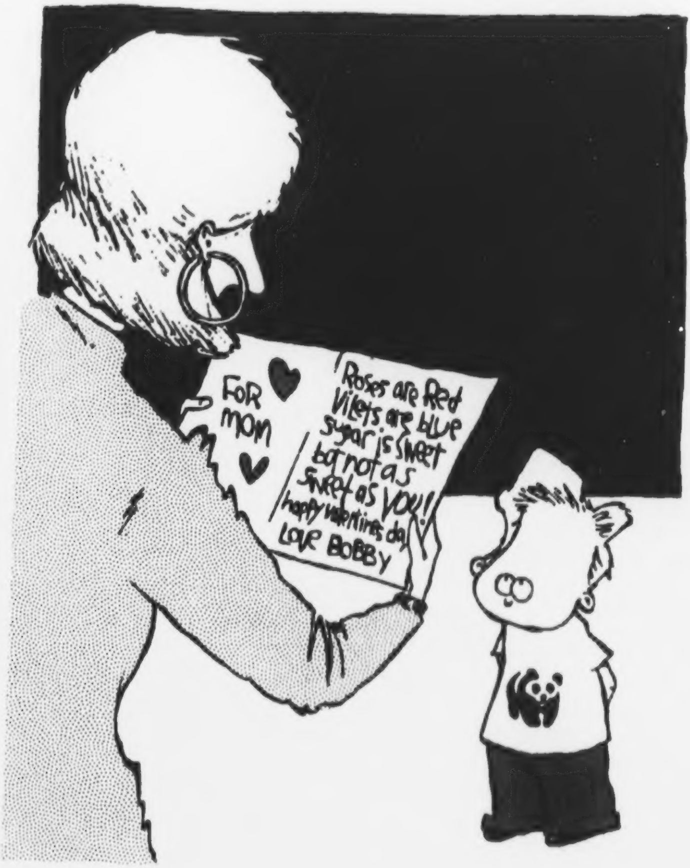

FoR mom
Roses are Red
Vilets are blue
sugar is Sweet
but not as
Sweet as you!
happy valentines day
Love BOBBY

Getting Started

Welcome to this issue of *Parents and Children Together*. Sharing poetry with your children can be fun as well as educational. In this issue we discuss how to enjoy poetry and how to reinforce learning by writing and reading poetry.

On side B of the tape (and in the second half of the booklet) we have read-along poems. We encourage you to listen to these poems and to read them with your children, so that they can participate in the excitement of poetry reading. Of course, your child can also listen to the poetry alone, if you wish.

Poetry for Every Child

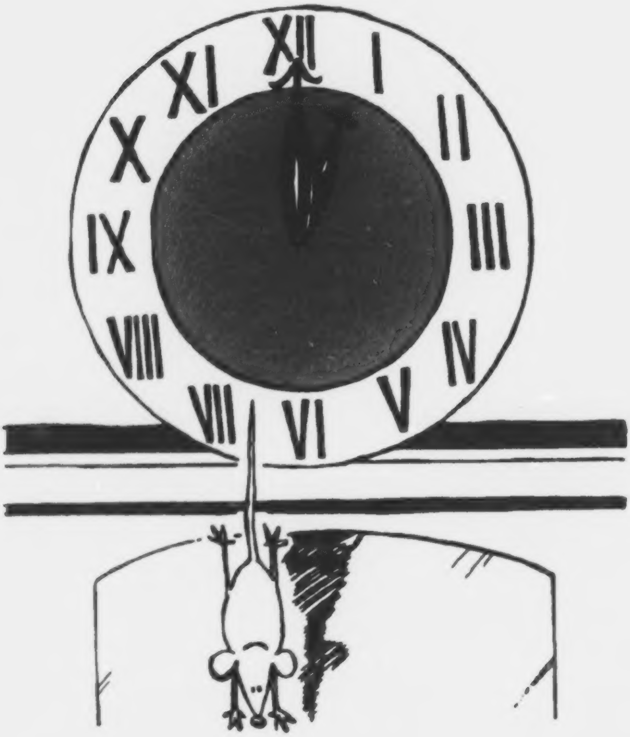
A recent popular song had these words toward the end:

> "Did you ever know that you're my hero,
> and everything I would like to be?
> I can fly higher than an eagle,
> 'cause you are the wind beneath my wings."

When we sing a song, the words seem to come easily, without thought. We feel the emotion partly because of the music and partly because the lyrics fill our imaginations with images—"hero," "fly like an eagle," "wind beneath my wings." That's poetry.

Usually we don't think of a song as poetry, do we? We think of it as music because it sets a beat in our brain. But those words and images that stimulate our feelings are the things of which poetry is made. Do you remember this?

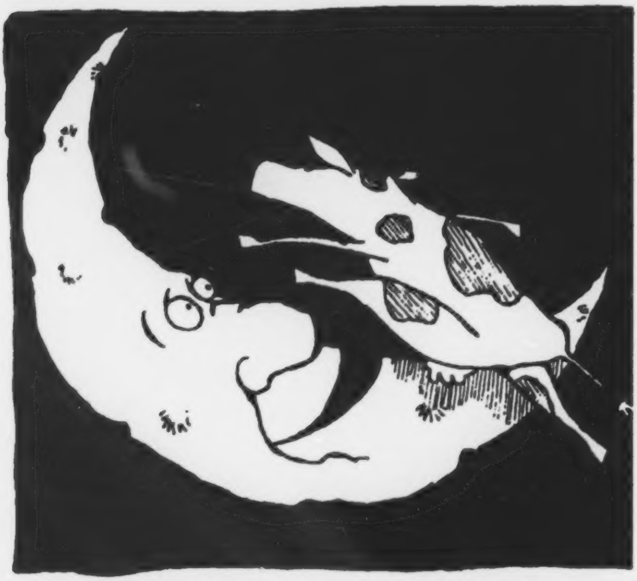
Hickory, dickory, dock.
The mouse ran up the clock.
The clock struck one.
The mouse ran down.
Hickory, dickory, dock.



That's one of the nursery rhymes I remember from my childhood. I hope it was part of your childhood, too. Nursery rhymes are also poetry. Often with bizarre images and rhythm and rhyme, nursery rhymes tickle the fancy of young children who love to repeat the rhythmic phrases and probably smile over the strange images that these rhymes bring forth:

Jack fell down and broke his crown.
And Jill came tumbling after.

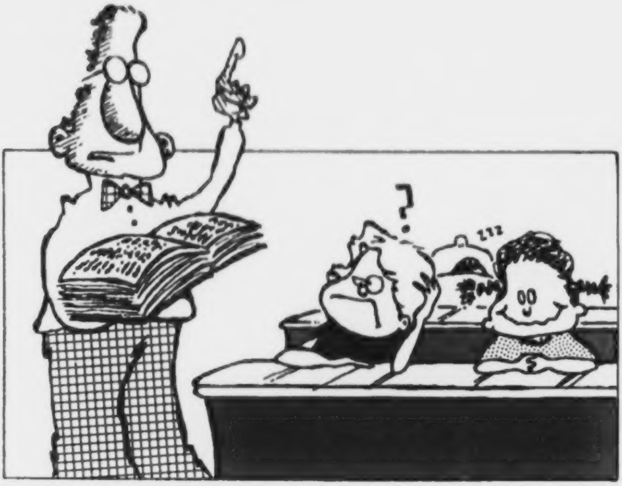
or

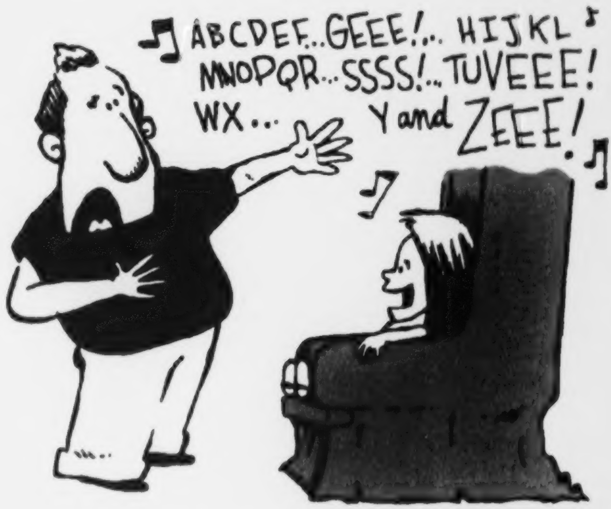


Hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle.
The cow jumped over the moon.
The little dog laughed to see such sport.
And the dish ran away with the spoon.

That's the way poetry starts for most of us—in nursery rhymes and in popular songs. We love those forms of poetry. But what happens to change our minds? Why do many of us begin to think poetry is not for us? Perhaps we let the study of poetry in school distract us from the fun, the uplifting feelings, and the pleasure we got from playing with language through poetry when we were very young.

The study of poetry might have seemed more sophisticated and aloof than we wanted to be. So we pushed the word poetry into a category with words like philosophy, literary symbolism, and other words that college professors like to talk about. As a result, we may deprive our children of the fun, the rhythm, and the learning that can take place through poetry.




ABCDEF...GEEE!... HIJKL
MNOPQR...SSSS!...TUVEEE!
WX... Y and ZEEE!

Yes, learning not only takes place through poetry, but poetry also makes it easier to learn,which is better than trying to force feed the information into our minds. Do you remember this?

One little, two little, three little Indians.
Four little, five little, six little Indians.
Seven little, eight little, nine little Indians.
Ten little Indian boys.

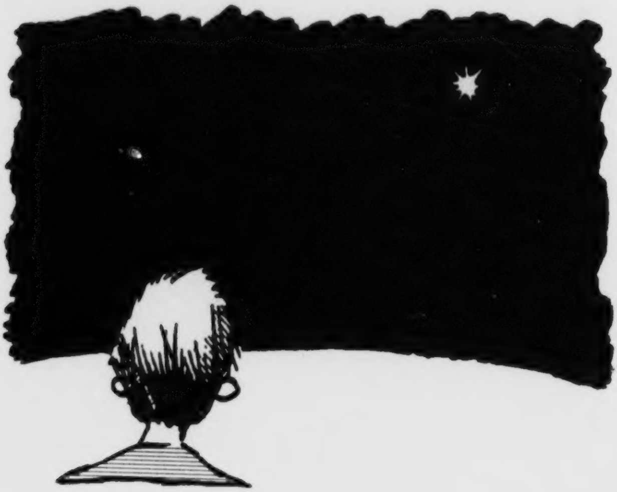
What are children learning with that short song, with that rhythmic poem? That's right. It's a counting poem. In a similar way, we teach the ABC's with the "Alphabet Song," and we teach the fifty states with the "Fifty Nifty States" song. Songs and jingles give us many opportunities to ask questions and to help our children think. For example:

Twinkle, twinkle, little star.

How I wonder what you are.

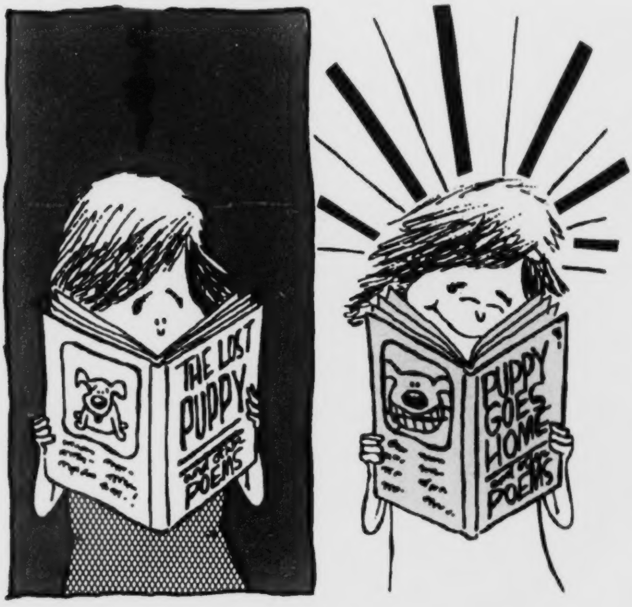
You see there is a question raised in the poem. Without dwelling on it, we can ask aloud: "Do you ever wonder what a star is?" And so we open the window to our child's curiosity—even if no specific answer is offered.

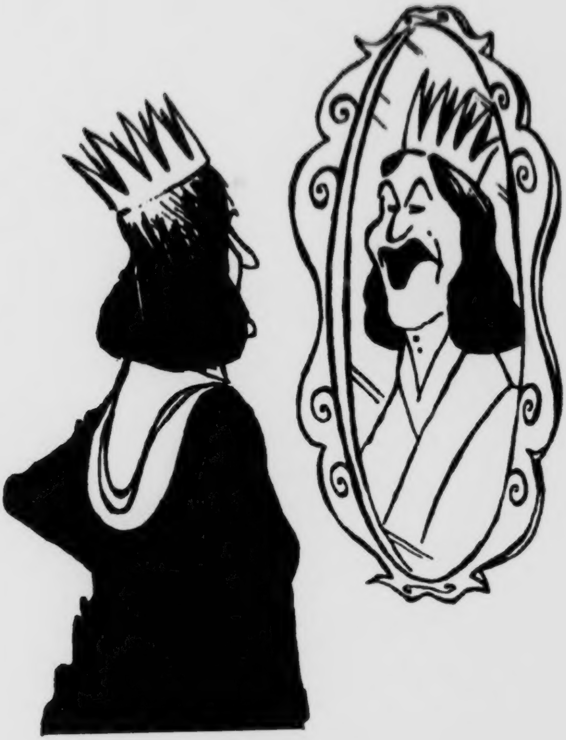
As parents, we can take our cue from the songs and jingles that we use to teach young children. By using them, we allow the child's fascination with rhythm and her natural curiosity about language to take over. In other words, we don't have to quiz our children after reciting or singing a poem. We don't have to pressure them to memorize a poem. If it is worth its salt, they will recite and play with the poem again and again—just as we sing a song again and again when it expresses a feeling that is important to us.



Promoting Poetry

If poetry expresses feelings better than most other forms of communication, and if poetry tends to make us curious about language, then we need to look for ways to make poetry a part of our consciousness more often than we do. For example, why not read a poem every day—at least for yourself—and also for your children. There are poetry books for all occasions, and your librarian would be happy to loan one to you. Read one to start the day; read one to end the day; read one when you are sad; read one when you are glad. There are recommended books of poetry in the books section of this magazine.





Sometimes your child will doubt his or her attractiveness; everyone does at various times in their lives. Then you can remind your child of the time when the wicked Queen in Snow White says:

> Mirror, mirror, on the wall,
> Who's the fairest of them all?

Or you could go to the index of a poetry book and look for a poem called "The Mirror" by Robert Graves.

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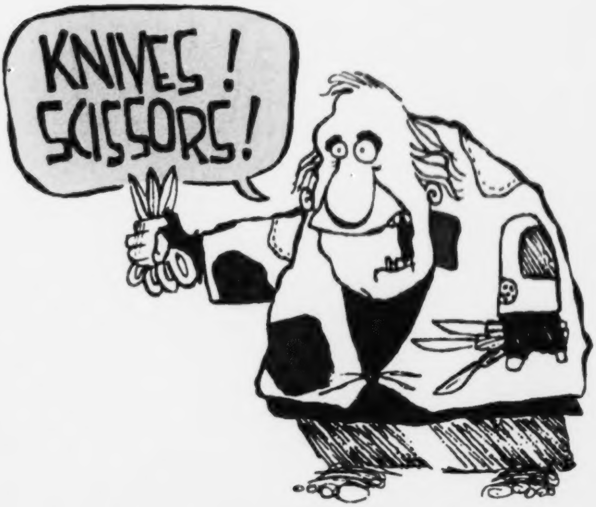
"Mirror mirror tell me
Am I pretty or plain?
Or am I downright ugly,
And ugly to remain?"

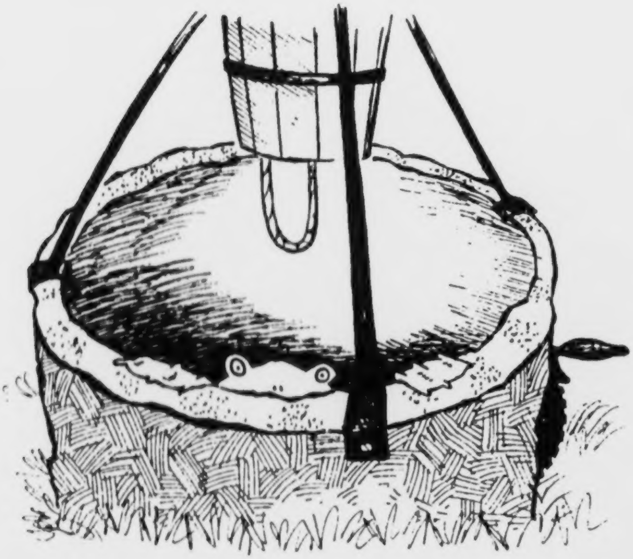
"Shall I marry a gentleman?
Shall I marry a clown?
Or shall I marry
Old Knives and Scissors
Shouting through the town?"


KNIVES ! SCISSORS!

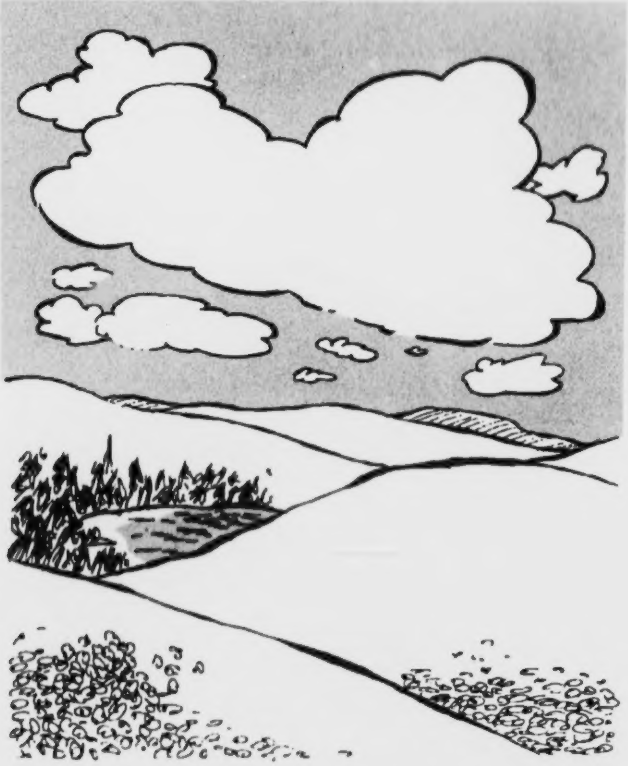
The reference to "old knives and scissors" may cause your child to ask what that means. And you can explain that in days gone by, some people roamed the streets of the town selling old knives and scissors or sharpening knives and scissors. They would stand in the streets and shout about their business. It was a hard life, and not one that most people would choose.

Another good way to stimulate your child's interest in poetry is by writing poetry. I don't mean you have to write poems, but you may do so. What may be more manageable, is for you and your child to illustrate a poem and turn it into a small book. All you have to do is take a line or two from a poem, write it on a page, and then draw a picture or cut out a picture that represents your image of those lines. For example, Stevie Smith has a poem entitled "The Frog Prince" which begins with four lines that could easily take two pages with illustration:

> Page one with an illustration: "I am a frog
> I live under a spell"
>
> Page two: "I live at the bottom
> Of a green well."



Or think about how you could illustrate William Wordsworth's well-known poem, "The Daffodils," which begins:



"I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,

When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils

Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze."

Your child could make a little greeting card booklet out of that poem and send it to Grandma and Grandpa.

In all that you do to promote poetry with your children, please remember that poetry stimulates feelings that may make their ears twitch and their eyes pop. It should start their tongue working over words and their feet tapping, tapping out the dance of language and life.

Parents' Questions about Poetry

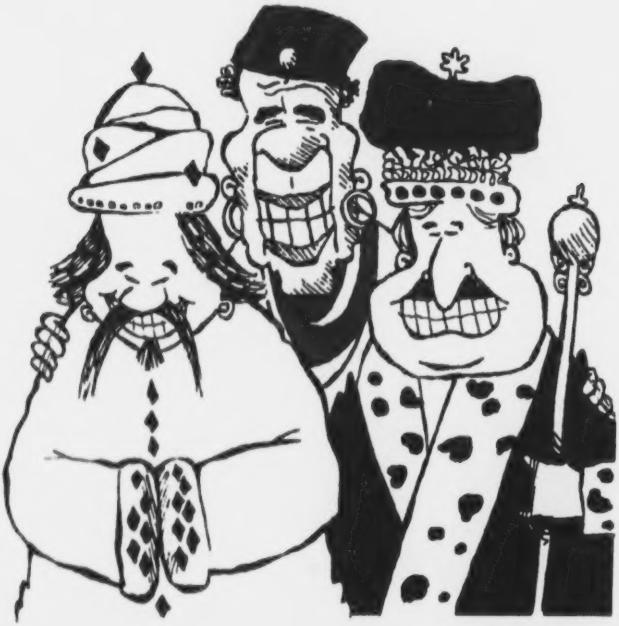
We would like to reply to a few questions parents frequently ask concerning children and poetry.

How can I get my older children interested in reading poetry at home?

As a parent, I think one of the best suggestions I ever received for making poetry part of our reading was the advice of one poet, "Keep a poem in your pocket." Now I didn't really do this, but I did get the idea of keeping a poem handy or close by. When I come across a poem that I enjoy and think my children might enjoy, I place it in a notebook for family sharing.

THE PURPLE COW

Why don't you show your children that you are interested in poetry by what you do? Start collecting your favorite poems. Have a poem ready for every mood, for every occasion: a poem to pull out on a rainy day when there can be no outdoor play or a poem to read when someone is feeling sad or discouraged. For example, Robert Louis Stevenson's "Happy Thought":



"The world is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings."

Introducing poetry means knowing where to find poems your children can enjoy and introducing them at opportune times.

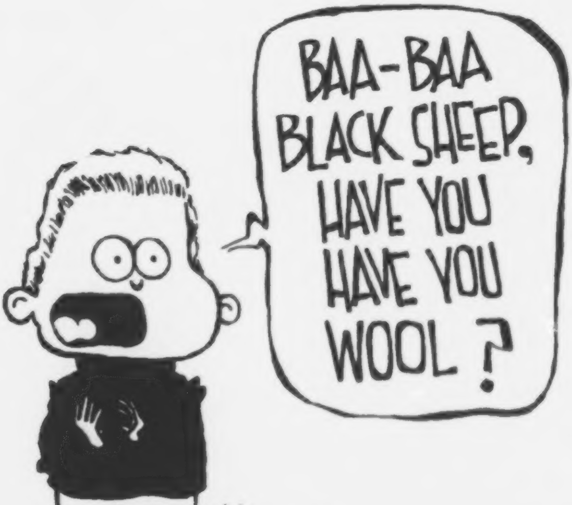
Start a notebook or a card file of favorite poems. If you group the poems by subject or mood—pets, birthdays, celebrations, love, and so on—you and your children will be able to make selections quickly. Perhaps your children will offer their own choices to yours. Maybe they will want to start their own notebooks of favorite poems.

HA HA
HA HA
POEMS OF BENNETT CERF

Make a habit of reading poetry to your children during the day—a funny poem, a touching poem, story poems, singing poems. Invite your children to select a poem to read aloud each day. Place the poem on the table, on the counter, post it on the refrigerator, or leave it in a prominent place where they can reread it easily.

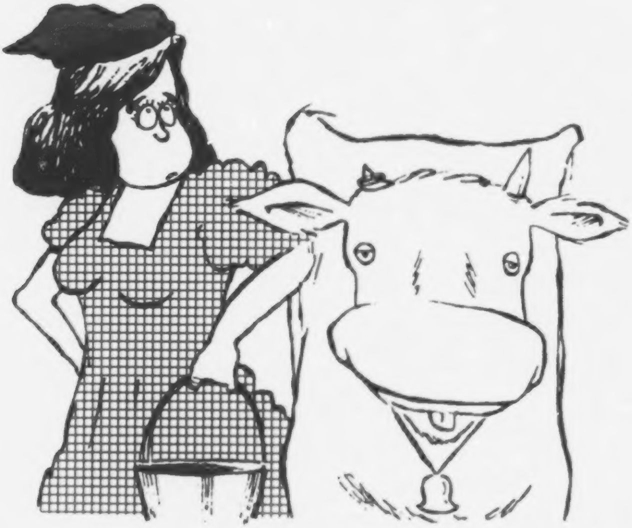
My son has reading problems. Would poetry be too difficult for him to read?

Poems can help children develop reading fluency. Select poems that are fun to read and that will keep your son's interest. Some poems have built-in rhythm that makes them more memorable and rememberable. It's unlikely that your son will remember whole paragraphs of a story, but he can learn many lines of poems and songs that are entertaining. The rhythmic sounds and patterns make poems perfect for chanting. This helps your son read them because the patterns of poetic language are predictable enough for your son to keep on reading.


BAA-BAA BLACK SHEEP, HAVE YOU HAVE YOU WOOL ?
TAP TAP TAP

You might try reading together with your son. You can be the model for reading the poem while your son repeats what you have read.

For example, by the time you are at one of the last verses in "The House that Jack Built," your son may be able to recite the last few lines with you.



This is the maiden all forlorn,
That milked the cow with the crumpled horn,
That tossed the dog,
That worried the cat,
That killed the rat,
That ate the malt,
That lay in the house that Jack built.

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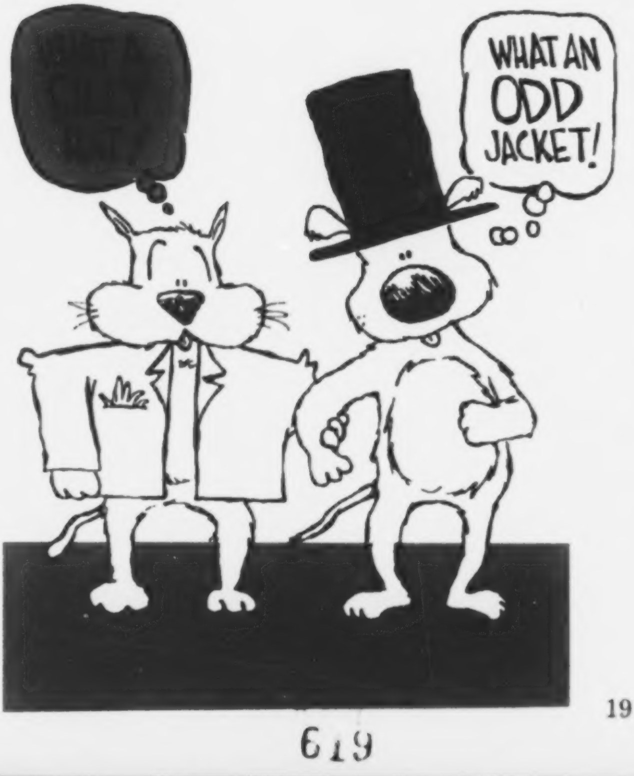
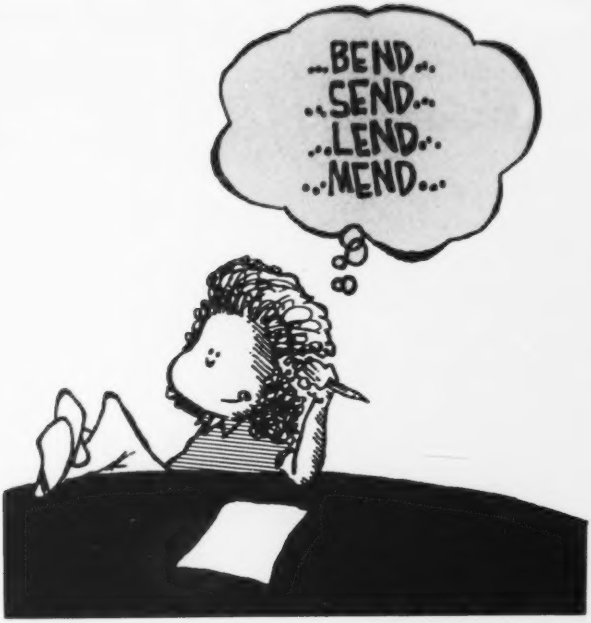
Sometimes my daughter must write a poem for homework. We both feel very frustrated with this type of assignment. How can I help her write poems?

In order for children to be able to write poems, they must read poems. As you read poetry with your daughter, comment upon certain words that are especially interesting, exciting, or unusual. Choose short poems that have humor and those that use words in a playful, fun way. For example,

Hoddley, poddley, puddle and fogs,
Cats are to marry the poodle dogs;
Cats in blue jackets and dogs in red hats,
What will become of the mice and the rats?

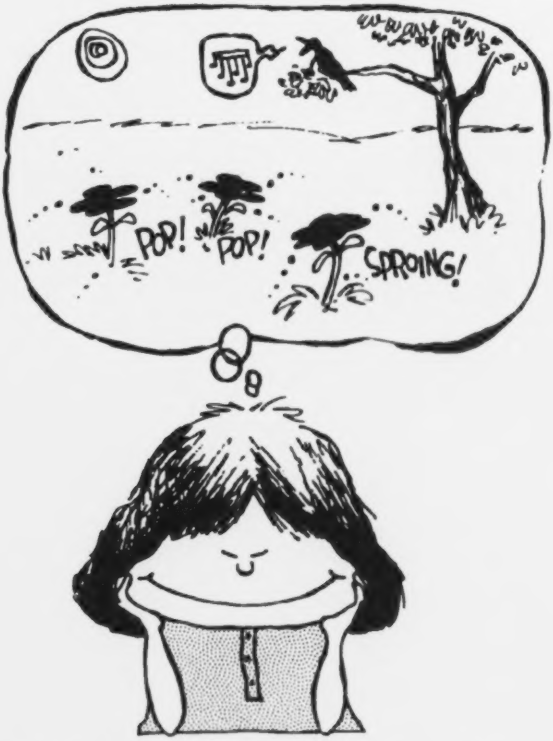

WHAT AN ODD JACKET!


..BEND..
..SEND..
..LEND..
..MEND...

Once your daughter has listened to or read this kind of poetry, she may have a sense of how poems flow and rhyme. Children often get caught up in trying to make the words rhyme and are unable to move forward with their writing. Provide examples of poems that rhyme and poems that don't rhyme so that your daughter knows the difference, like William Blake's "The Divine Image." Here is one of the verses:

> "For Mercy has a human heart;
> Pity, a human face;
> And Love, the human form divine;
> And Peace, the human dress."

As you begin to help your daughter write poems, have her concentrate on the five senses. You might begin with a timely experience. Seasonal themes work well. You might say, "Close your eyes. It's Spring. What do you see? What do you hear? Let your senses explore. What do you smell, taste, feel?" Or you might take a Fall walk, talk about colors or the movement of leaves, and talk about words that can describe your feelings and thoughts. Smell a leaf—it smells musty, peppery. Feel a leaf—it feels crumbly, dry.


POP!
POP!
SPROING!

Talk about what she might say in her poem. If your child seems to be groping for a word, give her some choices. You might say, "The leaves fall down...can you use another word that helps me see how they fall?" If she is still blocked, ask: "Did they float, drift, whisper?" Let her choose a word, thus giving her responsibility of choice and ownership. Often, she will then produce her own word. In considering choices of poetic words, your daughter is building a reservoir of rich language with you, acting as a resource.

If you have questions concerning poetry, please write to us, we will answer them for you. You may find your question in another issue of *Parents and Children Together*.

Write to:

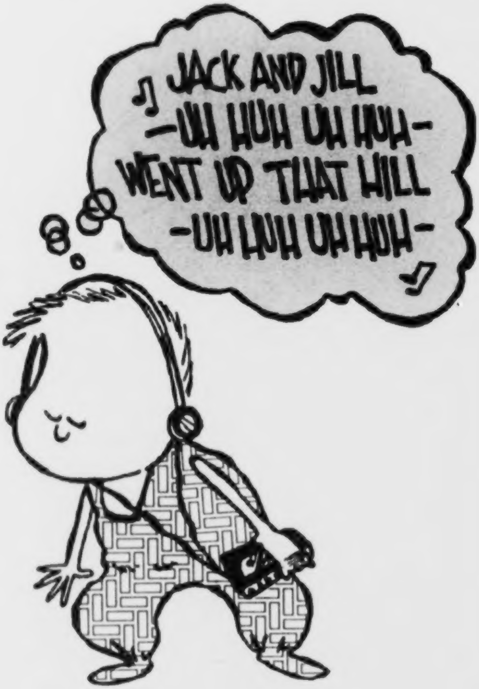
Editor, Parents and Children Together
Indiana University
2805 E. 10th Street, Suite 150
Bloomington, IN 47408-2698

Activities for Fun and Learning

Have some fun with poetry by trying one or two of the following activities you and your child can do together.

Play On!

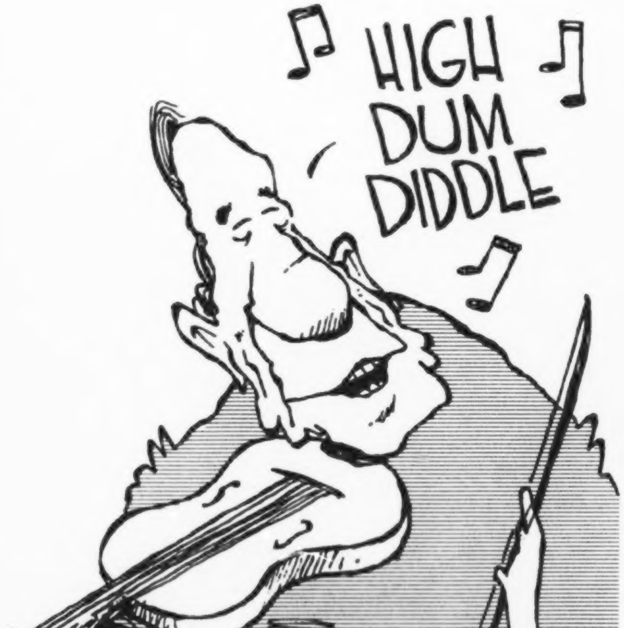
Listening to nursery rhymes can be a fun way to introduce young children to the rhyme and rhythm of language. Try playing a tape or record of nursery rhymes for your child to listen to instead of watching television.


JACK AND JILL
-UH HUH UH HUH-
WENT UP THAT HILL
-UH HUH UH HUH-

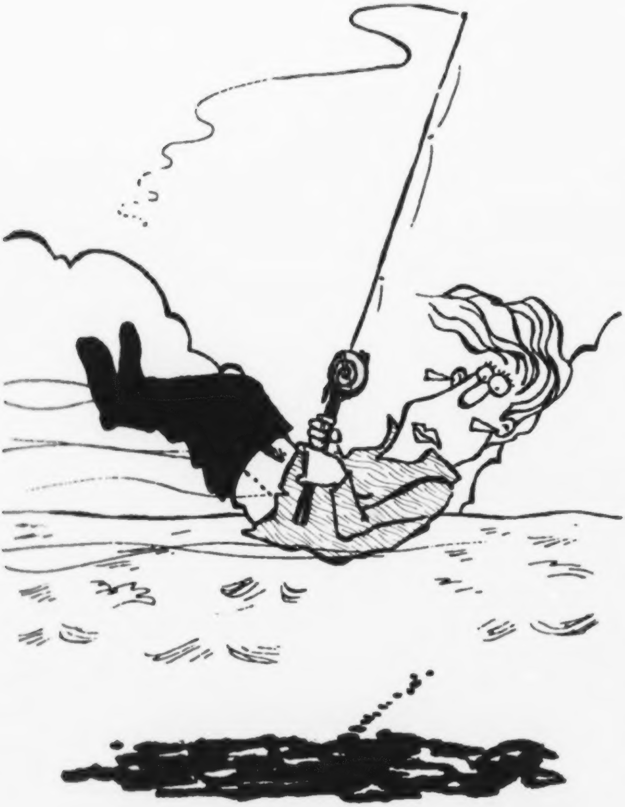
Oh Nonsense!

- Edward Lear wrote many nonsense poems. The following is one of his verses:

"There was an Old Man of the Isles,
Whose face was pervaded with smiles;
He sang 'High dum diddle,'
And played on the fiddle,
That amiable Man of the Isles."



Together, substitute your own character and use Mr. Lear's pattern to make a similar nonsense poem. For example:



There was a Young Person of Nor,
Who fished too far from the shore;
A strong gust blew,
And away she flew,
That flighty Young Person of Nor.

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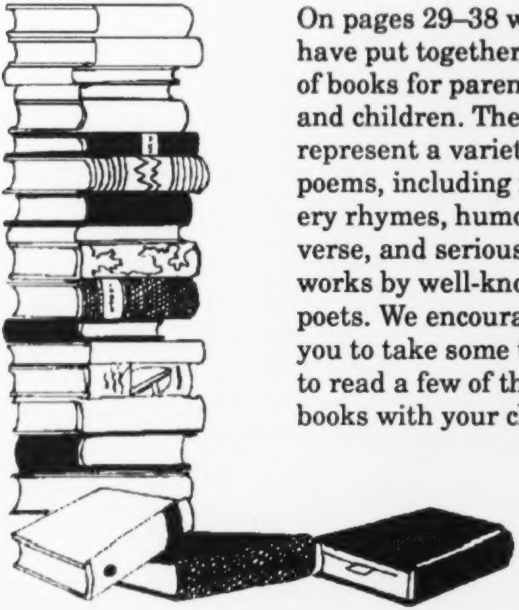
Give Me Five

- Cinquain is a form of poetry developed by Adelaide Crapsey. It consists of five lines with two syllables in the first line, four in the second, six in the third, eight in the fourth, and two in the fifth. These lines are written without the use of rhyme. For example:

Cold pop,
Tickles my nose.
As it slides down my throat,
Hear it bubble, gurgle, fizzle.
Sip fun.

Books for Parents and Children



On pages 29–38 we have put together lists of books for parents and children. These represent a variety of poems, including nursery rhymes, humorous verse, and serious works by well-known poets. We encourage you to take some time to read a few of these books with your child.

At the beginning of this issue, we mentioned that side B of the audio tape contains poetry designed to be read-along poetry. You may want to take some time to look ahead at these poems before you read along with your child.

Before reading the poem, talk about the title or things that might happen in the poem. Then, after the poem is finished, talk about it again. By the way, if in the middle of the poem something funny or interesting happens, it's O.K. to stop the tape and discuss the event, or ask your child questions such as "Do you think there is a place called St. Ives?" or "Have you ever eaten a raw oyster? Would you like to try one?" and then follow it up with a why or why not. These questions make your conversation about the poem more natural and valuable.

When you and your child are ready, turn the tape to side B and listen to the poems as you read along together, or you may read the poems aloud while your child reads along in the booklet.

Books for Parents

Poem-making: Ways to Begin Writing Poetry, by Myra Cohn Livingston (HarperCollins). Introduces the mechanics of writing poetry. Covers different voices of poetry, types of rhyme and other elements of sound including rhythm and metrics. Discusses various forms of poetry and figures of speech.

Finger Rhymes, collected and illustrated by Marc Brown. Includes traditional and less-familiar rhymes. Easy-to-follow diagrams show finger gestures to go along with each rhyme.

The Healing Power of Poetry, by Dr. Smiley Blanton. Shares how to use poetry to help ease and cope with anxiety, loneliness, anger, depression, and frustration.

♥ ♡ ♥ ♡ ♥

Books to Read Together

Ages 4-6

A Fine Fat Pig, by Mary Ann Hoberman (HarperCollins). Contains fourteen animal poems with bright, bold pictures. The artist painted the pictures and the author wrote the poems to go along with the paintings.

Under the Sunday Tree, by Eloise Greenfield (Harper Trophy). Includes lively illustrations and expressive verse that portray life in the Bahamas. Poems symbolize people, animals, and settings.

Bungalow Fungalow, by Pegi Deitz Shea (Clarion Books). Depicts Billy's stay at his grandparents's bungalow on the beach. Begins with the invitation to visit and concludes with the trip back home.

Ages 6-8

Up in the Mountains and Other Poems of Long Ago, by Claudia Lewis (HarperCollins). Recounts a young girl's childhood during the turn-of-the-century in America. Sketches are in black and white.

Side by Side: Poems to Read Together, collected by Lee Bennett Hopkins (Simon and Schuster). Contains poems by Lewis Carroll, Robert Frost, Aileen Fisher, Eve Merriam, and others. Bright and lively illustrations accompany the text. These poems have been selected specifically for sharing.

The Nonsense Poems of Edward Lear, illustrated by Leslie Brooke (Clarion Books). A collection of foolish, laughable, and ridiculous poems by the English humorist and artist, Edward Lear.

Ages 8-10

Rhymes and Verses: Collected Poems for Young People, by Walter de la Mare (Henry Holt). Includes over three-hundred poems covering a wide variety of subject matter.

For Laughing Out Loud: Poems to Tickle Your Funny Bone, selected by Jack Prelutsky (Alfred A. Knopf). A collection of 132 hilarious poems. "and if you almost split your sides, that's what this book is for."

Handspan of the Red Earth: An Anthology of American Farm Poems, edited by Catherine Lewallen Marconi (University of Iowa Press). Contains an assortment of contemporary poetry about farming the diverse and unique lands of America. Includes poems by Galway Kinnell, Mary Swander, Dennis Schmitz, Maxine Kumin, and many others.

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Books for Your Children to Read by Themselves

Ages 4-6

Pudding and Pie, chosen by Sarah Williams (Oxford University Press). Contains forty traditional nursery rhymes including "Jack and Jill," "Little Tommy Tucker," "Hey, Diddle, Diddle," "Old King Cole," and "Little Miss Muffet."

MISS MUFFET, COME BACK! WHERE ARE YOU GO-....SAY! CURDS AND WHEY! YES!

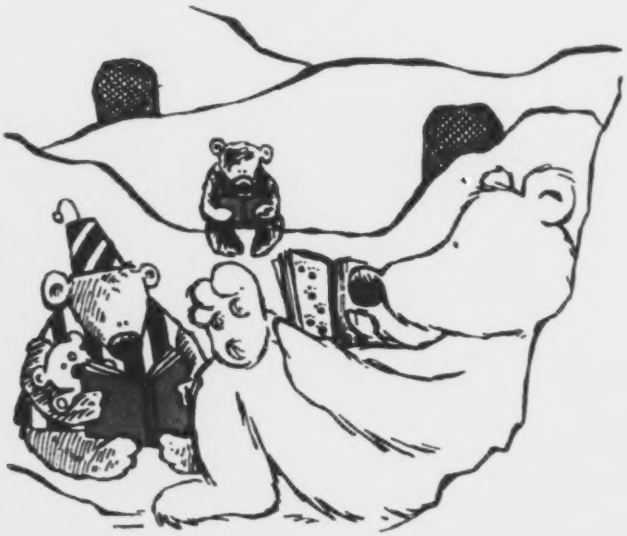
All Join In, by Quentin Blake (Little, Brown). Six lively poems invite the reader to join in the fun and excitement that can be found in daily life. Shows children enjoying singing, sliding, and even cleaning.

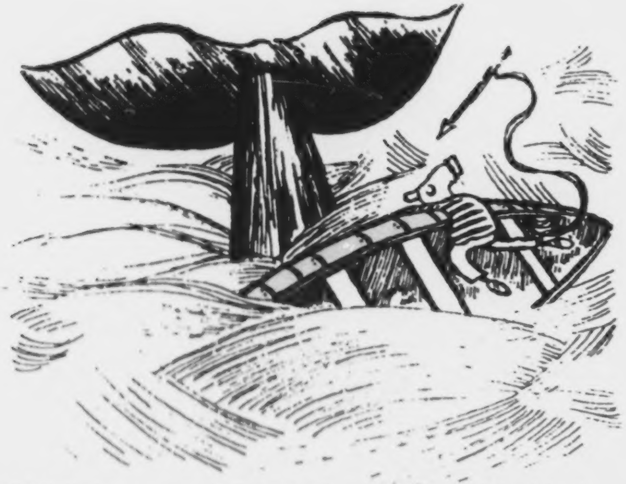
Rain, Rain, Go Away! A Book of Nursery Rhymes, illustrated by Jonathan Langley (Dial). Offers a large collection of nursery rhymes. Delightful illustrations accompany the text.

Ages 6-8

Scary Poems for Rotten Kids, by Sean O Huigin (Black Moss Press). Poems focus on "the monstrous episodes in the life of any ordinary child." Full of creepy, scary, and weird things.

Bear in Mind: A Book of Bear Poems, selected by Bobbye S. Goldstein (Puffin Books). Presents through poetry, polar bears, honey bears, circus bears, zoo bears, teddy bears, and even a grandpa bear.





A Child's Treasury of Seside Verse, complied by Mark Daniel (Dial). This collection is a medley of poems about the sea, and is written by some of the best American and English writers. Paintings and engravings from the Victorian and Edwardian eras illustrate the text

Ages 8-10

Roald Dahl's Revolting Rhymes, Roald Dahl (Bantam Books). Offers unique retellings of the following fairy tales: "Cinderella," "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," "Jack and the Beanstalk," "Goldilocks and the Three Bears," "Little Red Riding Hood," and "The Three Little Pigs."

You Come Too: Favorite Poems for Young Readers, by Robert Frost (Henry Holt). Contains a selection of poems by the Pulitzer prize winning poet, Robert Frost. Shares thoughts from his heart.

The Usborne Book of Funny Poems, selected by Heather Amery (Usborne Publishing). This assortment of poetry consists of whimsical new poems for children. Colorful and amusing pictures accompany the text.

BOOK
OF
FUNN
POEMS

Also consider, *Where the Sidewalk Ends* and *A Light in the Attic,* by Shel Silverstein. These collections of poems and drawings are favorites of every age group.

Magazines

Ask your librarian for the following magazines:

Children's Album

Cricket

Highlights for Children

Junior Editor

Ladybug

Reflections

Seedling Series: Short Story International

Shoe Tree

Stone Soup: The Magazine by Children

♥ ♡ ♥ ♡ ♥

Read-along Poems

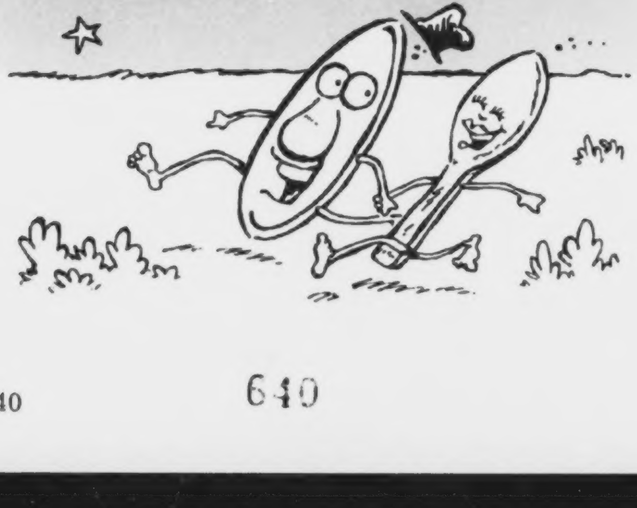
Nursery Rhymes

Things to do *before* reading the poems

Read the titles of the next four poems. Draw a picture of what each title brings to your mind. Add to your picture after you read the poem.

Hey, Diddle, Diddle

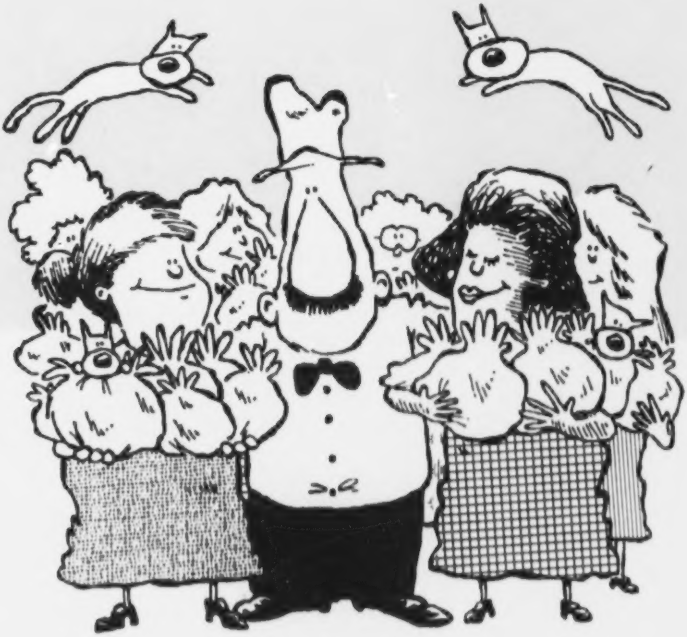
Hey, diddle, diddle,
The cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon.
The little dog laughed
To see such sport,
And the dish ran away with the spoon.

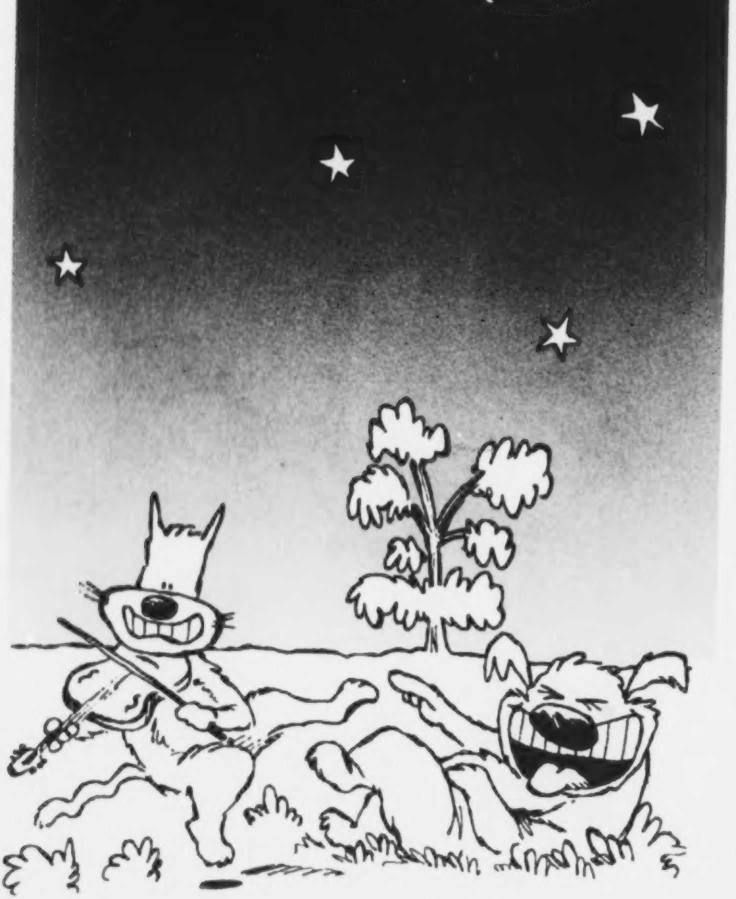


As I Was Going to St. Ives

As I was going to St. Ives,
I met a man with seven wives;
Each wife had seven sacks,
Each sack had seven cats,
Each cat had seven kits:

Kits, cats, sacks and wives,
How many were there going to St. Ives?





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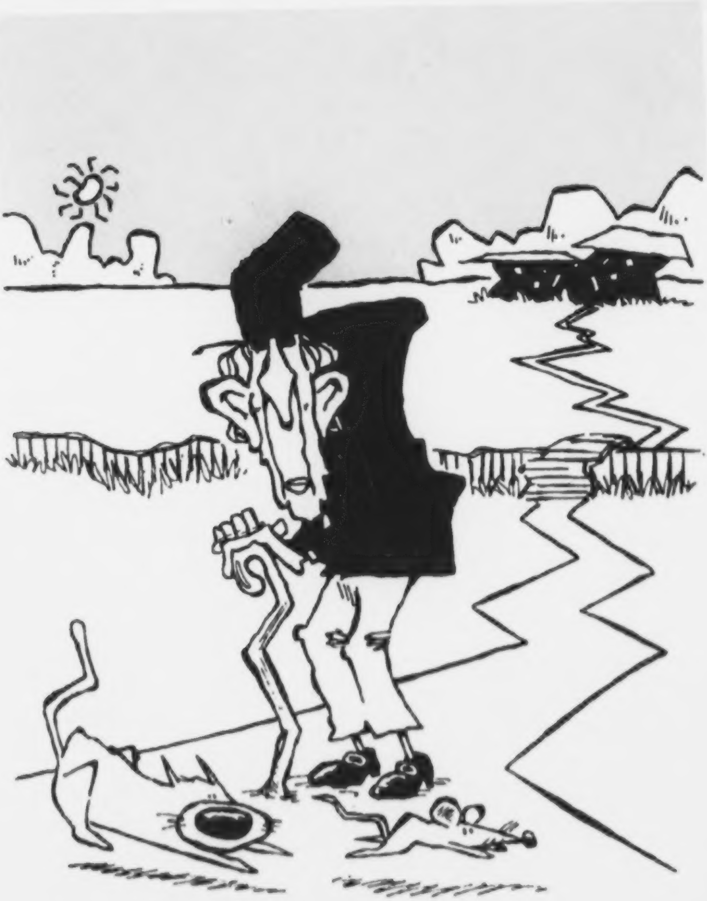

There Was a Crooked Man

There was a crooked man,
 And he walked a crooked mile;
He found a crooked sixpence
 Against a crooked stile;

He bought a crooked cat,
 Who caught a crooked mouse,
And they all lived together
 In a crooked house.

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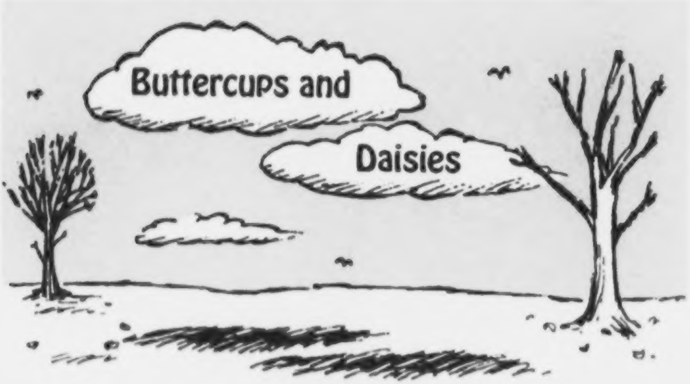
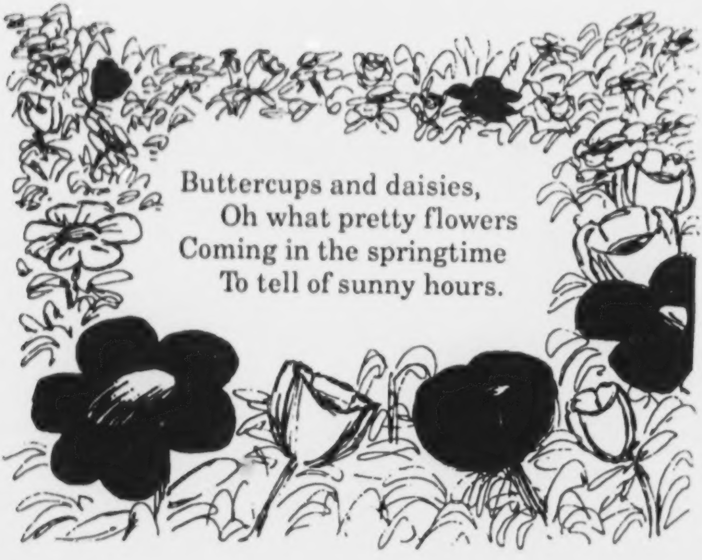
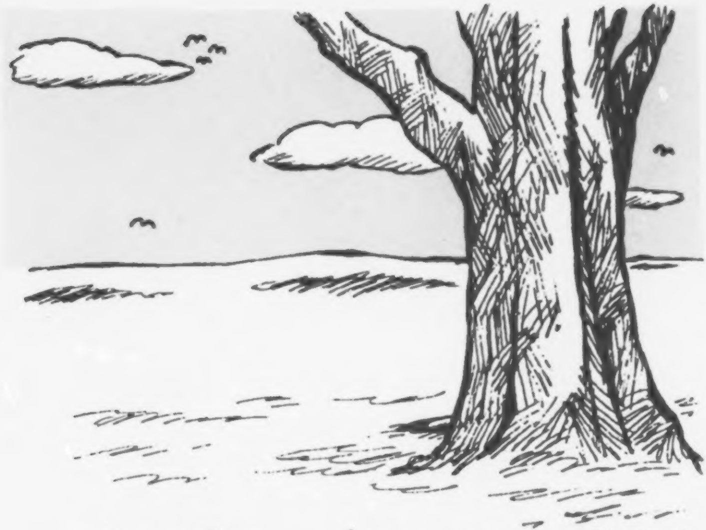
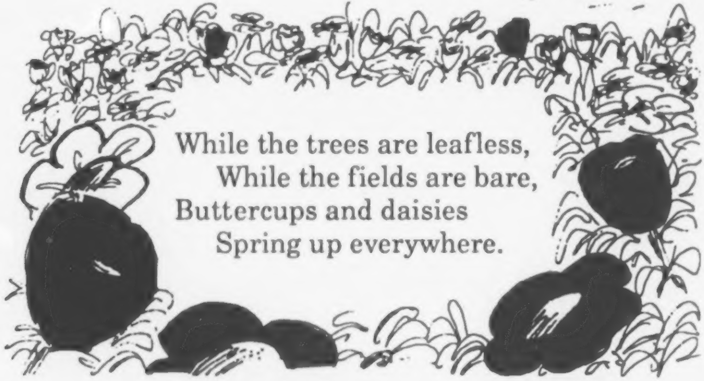

Buttercups and
Daisies



Buttercups and daisies,
Oh what pretty flowers
Coming in the springtime
To tell of sunny hours.





While the trees are leafless,
  While the fields are bare,
Buttercups and daisies
  Spring up everywhere.

Things to do *after* reading the poems

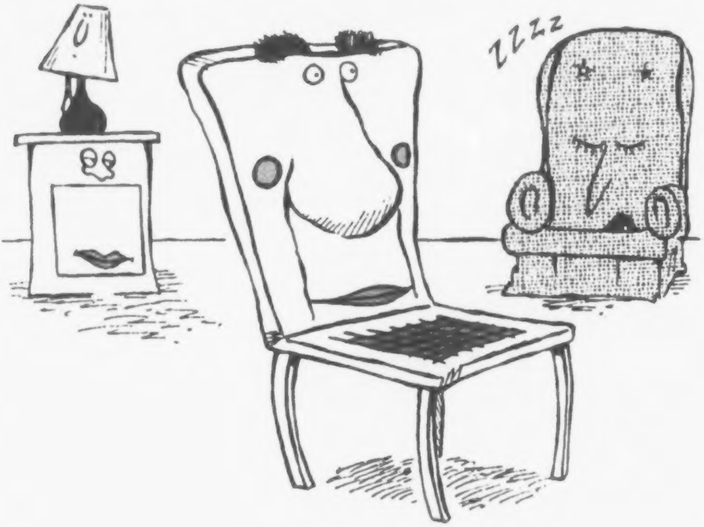
In what ways are these poems alike? How are they different? Which poem do you like the best? Why?

The Table and the Chair

by Edward Lear

Things to do *before* reading the poem

This poem is about a table and a chair that can talk. If tables and chairs could really talk, what do you think a table and chair from your house might say? How about the dishes or your toothbrush?



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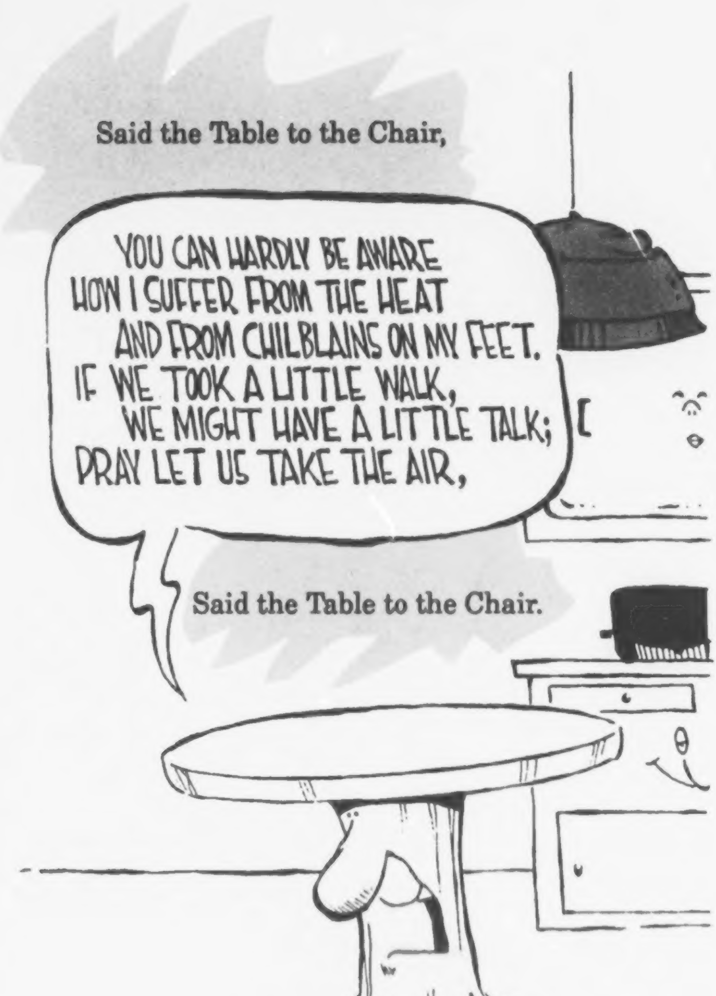
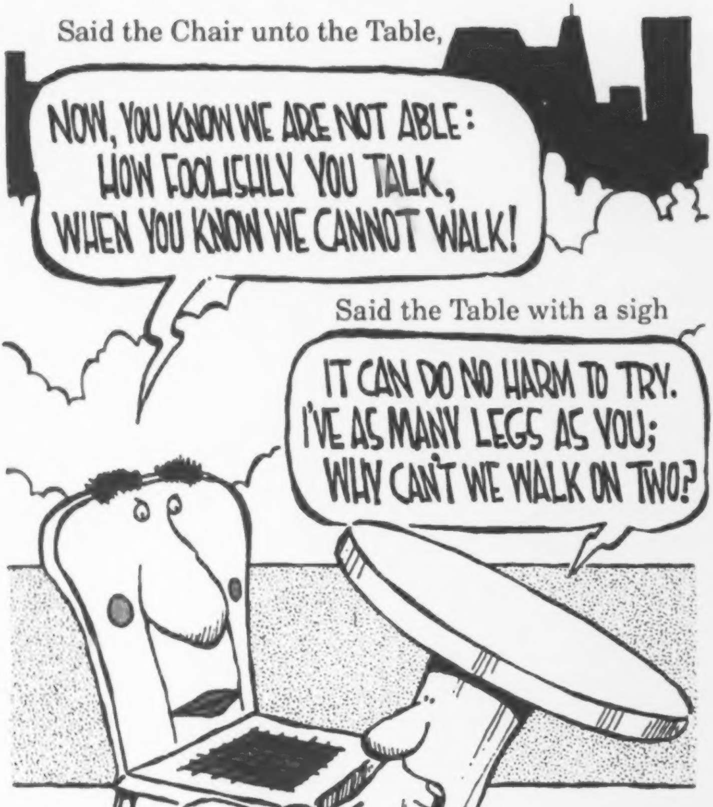
Said the Table to the Chair,


YOU CAN HARDLY BE AWARE
HOW I SUFFER FROM THE HEAT
AND FROM CHILBLAINS ON MY FEET.
IF WE TOOK A LITTLE WALK,
WE MIGHT HAVE A LITTLE TALK;
PRAY LET US TAKE THE AIR,

Said the Table to the Chair.

Said the Chair unto the Table,

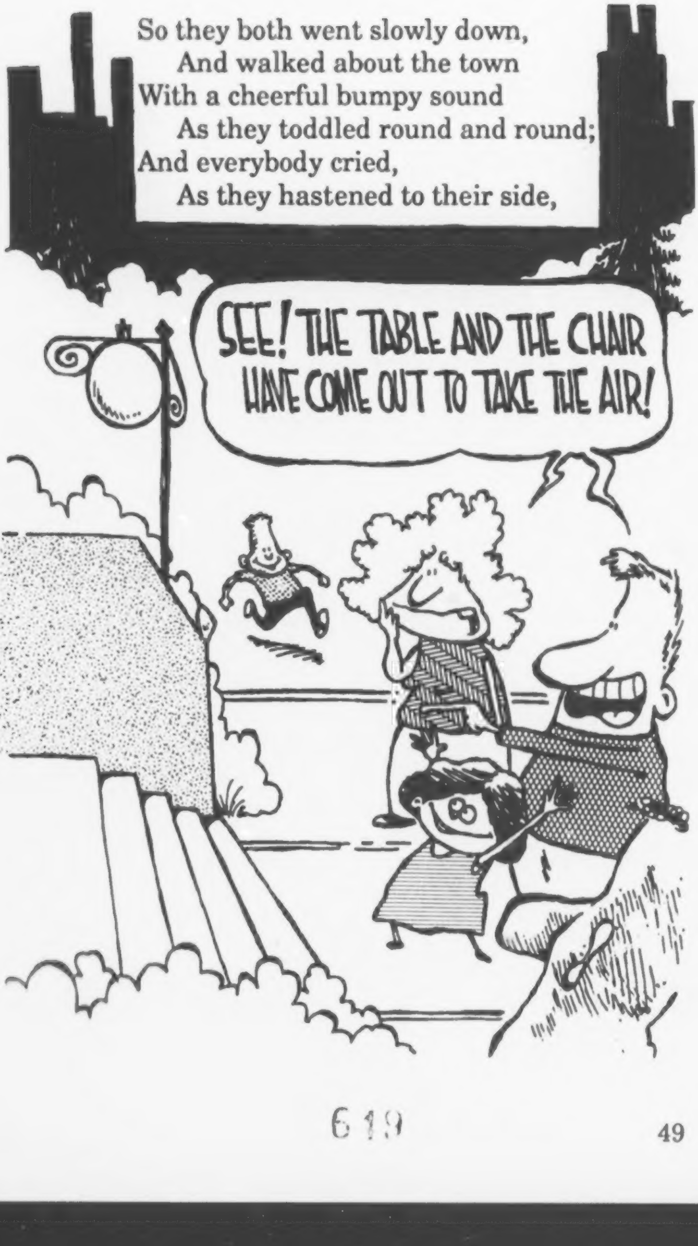


NOW, YOU KNOW WE ARE NOT ABLE:
HOW FOOLISHLY YOU TALK,
WHEN YOU KNOW WE CANNOT WALK!

Said the Table with a sigh

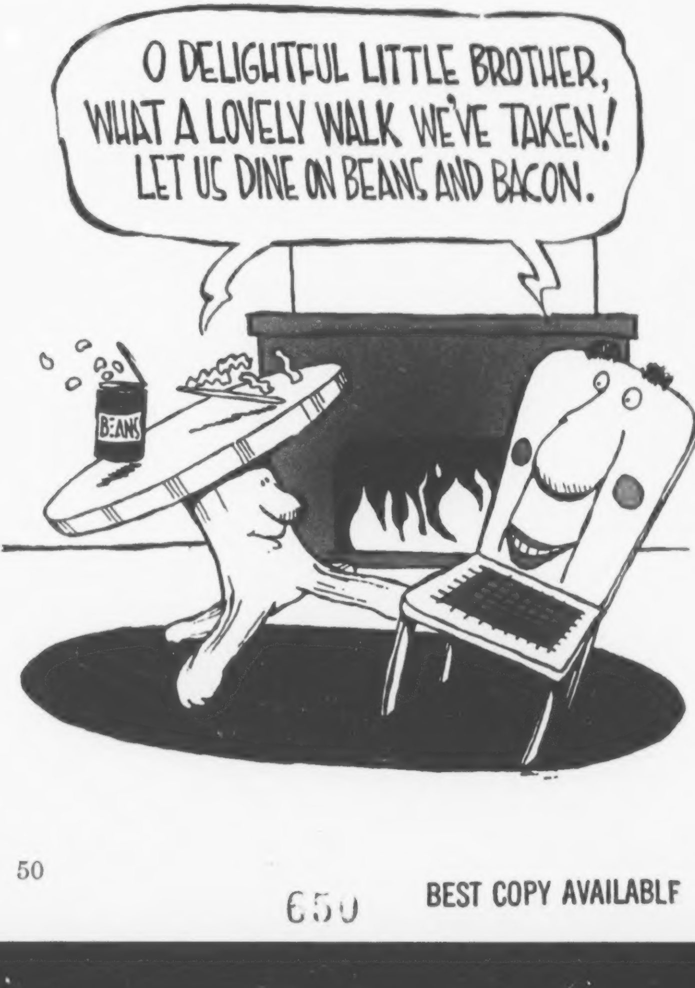
IT CAN DO NO HARM TO TRY.
I'VE AS MANY LEGS AS YOU;
WHY CAN'T WE WALK ON TWO?

So they both went slowly down,
And walked about the town
With a cheerful bumpy sound
As they toddled round and round;
And everybody cried,
As they hastened to their side,


SEE! THE TABLE AND THE CHAIR
HAVE COME OUT TO TAKE THE AIR!

But in going down an alley
    To a castle in a valley,
They completely lost their way,
    And wandered all the day;
Till, to see them safely back,
    They paid a Ducky-quack,
And a Beetle, and a Mouse,
    Who took them to their house.

Then they whispered to each other,


O DELIGHTFUL LITTLE BROTHER,
WHAT A LOVELY WALK WE'VE TAKEN!
LET US DINE ON BEANS AND BACON.
BEANS

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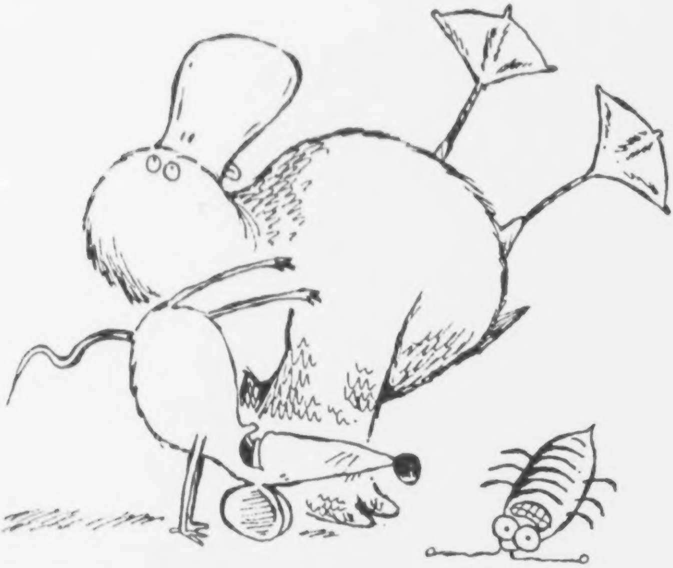
So the Ducky and the leetle
Browny-Mouse and the Beetle
Dined and danced upon their heads
Till they toddled to their beds.



Things to do *after* reading the poem

In this poem, some unusual words were used, such as chilblains, ducky-quack, and leetle. Do you think these are words? Look in the dictionary and see if you can find them. Hunt for some unfamiliar words in the dictionary or make up some of your own nonsense words and write your own poem.

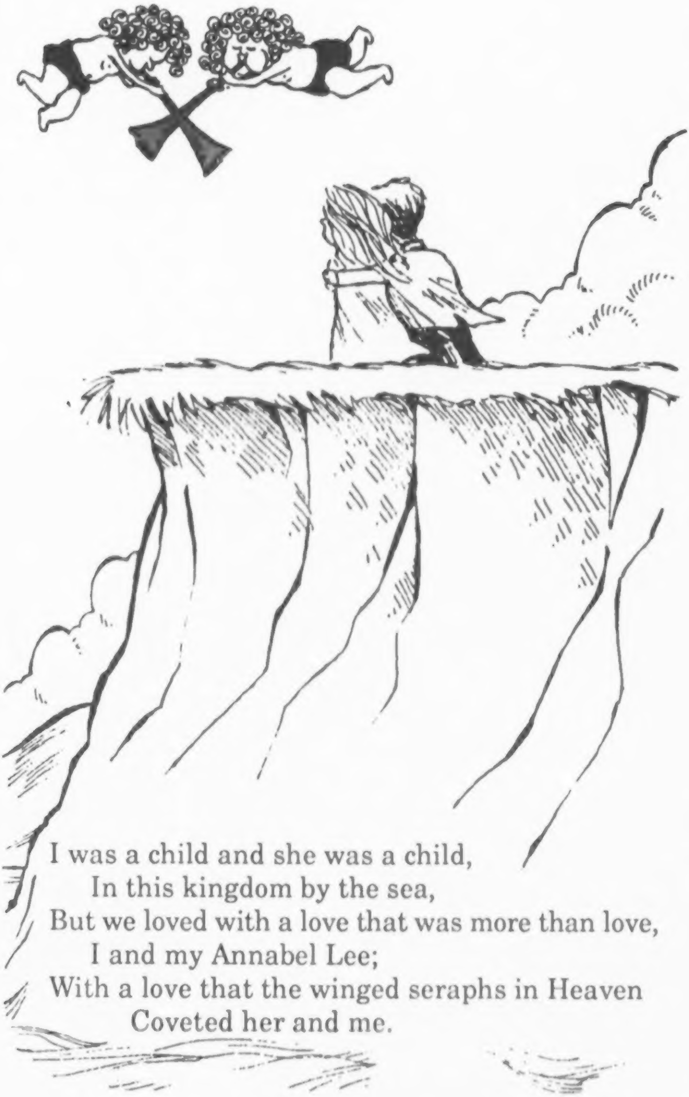
Annabel Lee

by Edgar Allan Poe

Things to do *before* reading the poem

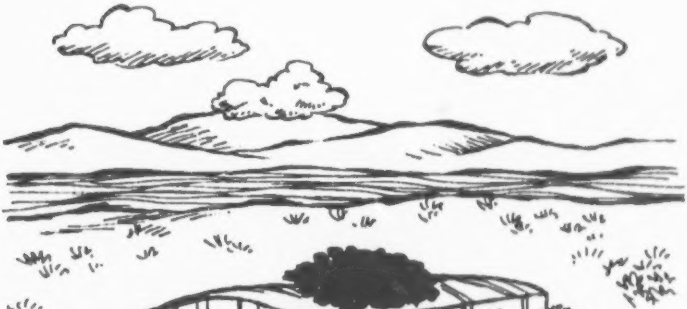
Annabel Lee is a famous love poem. Many poets write about love because it means so much to them. If you were going to write a poem about someone you love, what would you say?

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

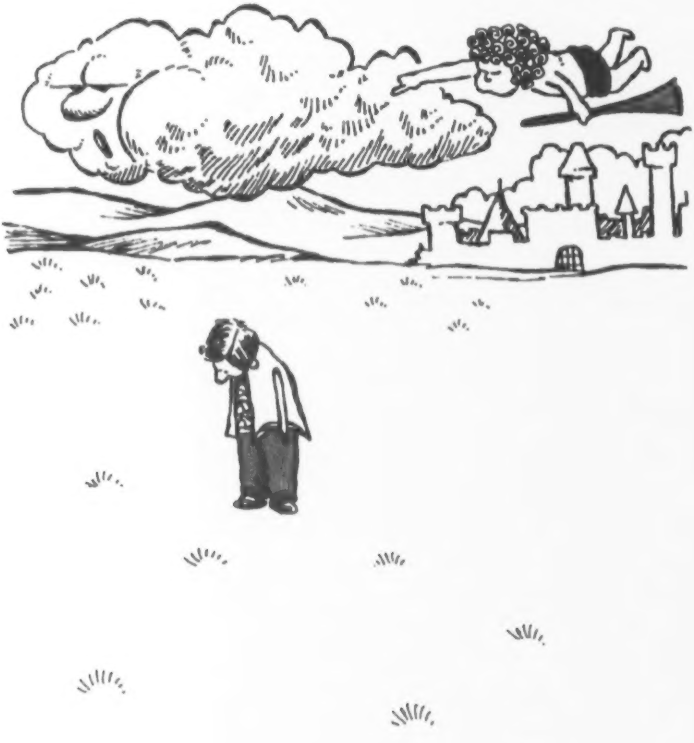


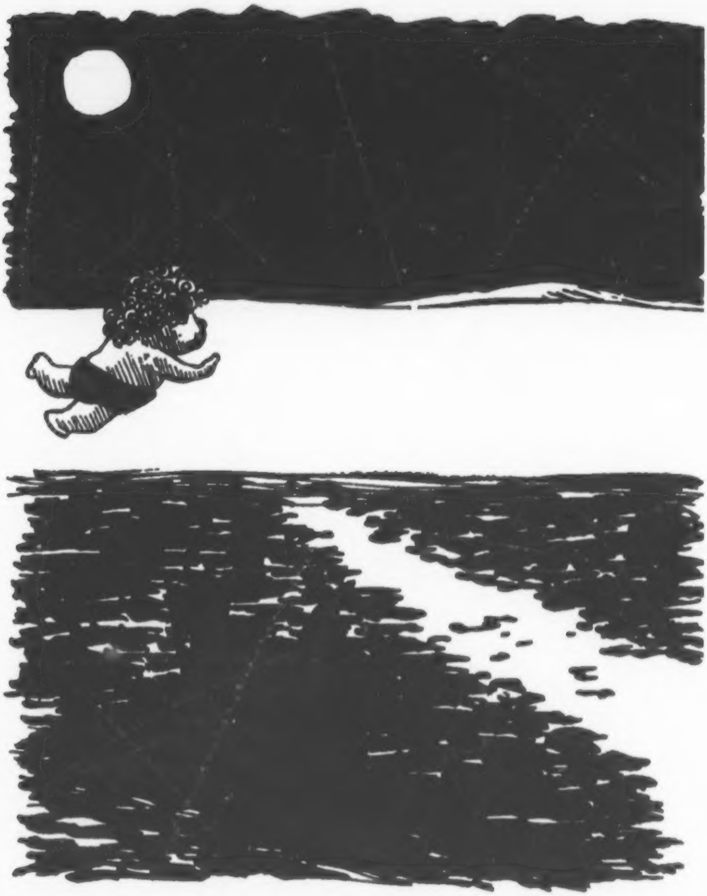
I was a child and she was a child,
 In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more than love,
 I and my Annabel Lee;
With a love that the winged seraphs in Heaven
  Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her high-born kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea.

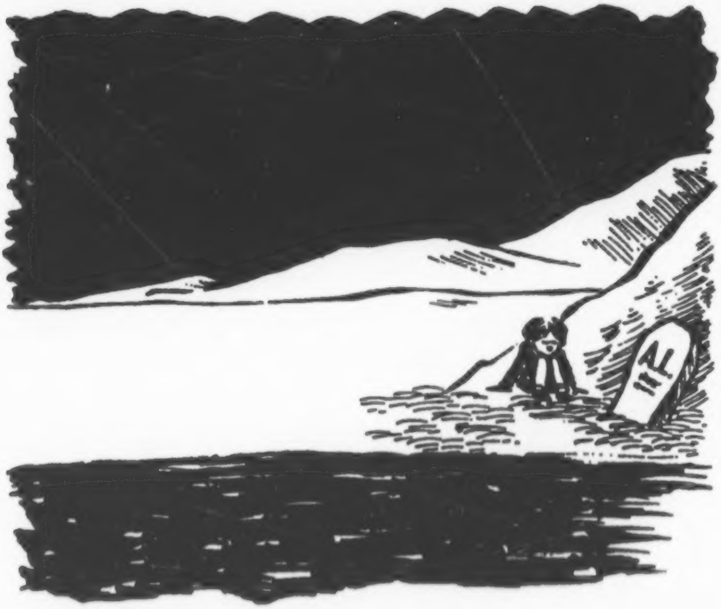


The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
  Went envying her and me;
Yes, that was the reason (as all men know,
  In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
  Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.





But our love it was stronger by far than the love
 Of those who were older than we,
 Of many far wiser than we;
And neither the angels in Heaven above,
 Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
 Of the beautiful Annabel Lee.



For the moon never beams
without bringing me dreams
    Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise but I feel the bright eyes
    Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
    Of my darling, my darling, my life and my bride,
In her sepulchre there by the sea,
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

Things to do *after* reading the poem

Talk about how this poem made you feel. Happy, sad, scared, peculiar? What particular verse made you feel this way? Why?

The Walrus and the Carpenter

by Lewis Carroll

Things to do *before* reading the poem

Lewis Carroll, author of this poem, also wrote *Alice in Wonderland.* Like that story, this one is filled with nonsense. A fun way to make up a nonsense story is to have one person in a group start the first line or paragraph of a story. "Once upon a time. . . " Then the next person says the next line or paragraph. Take turns until you reach an ending point.

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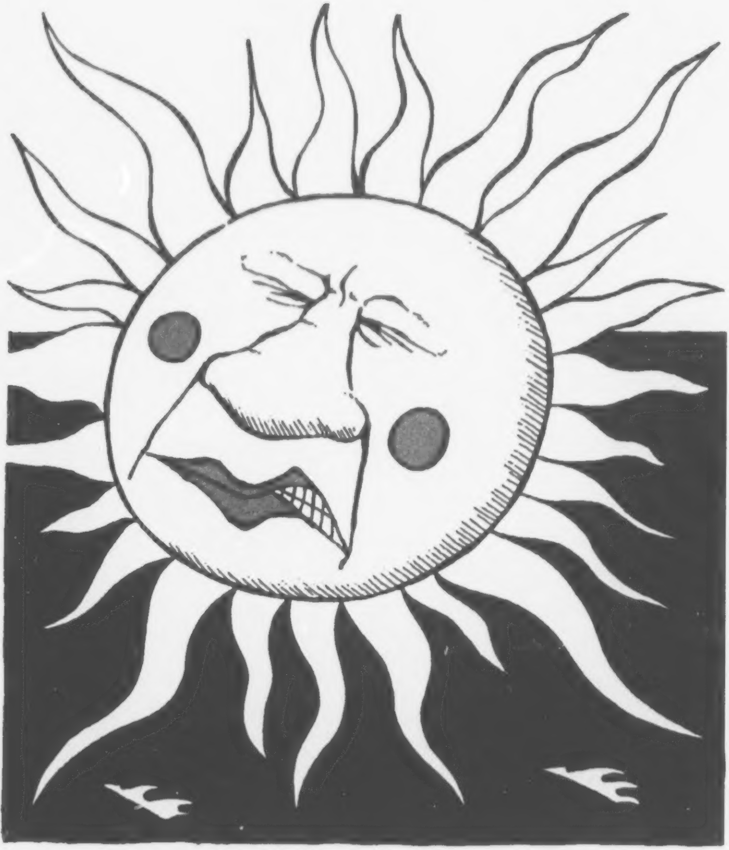
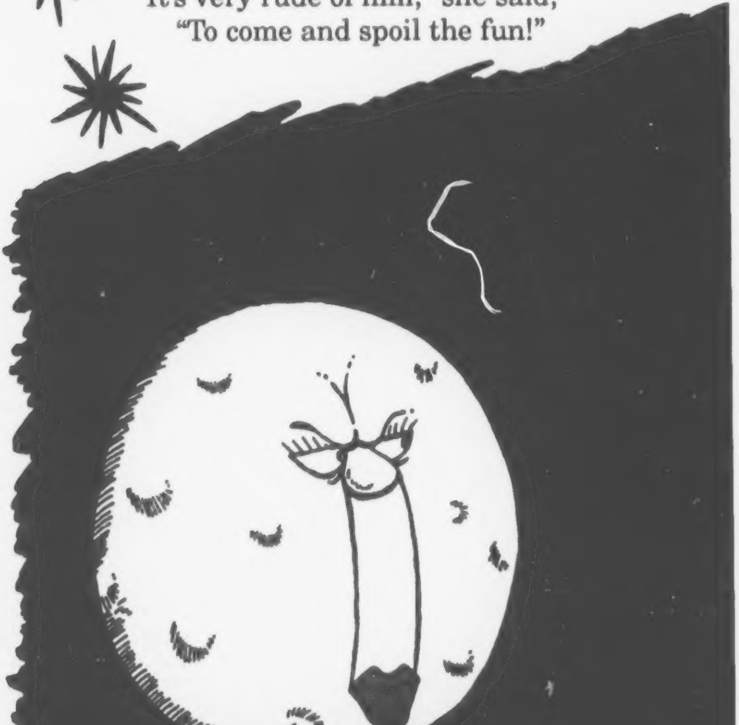
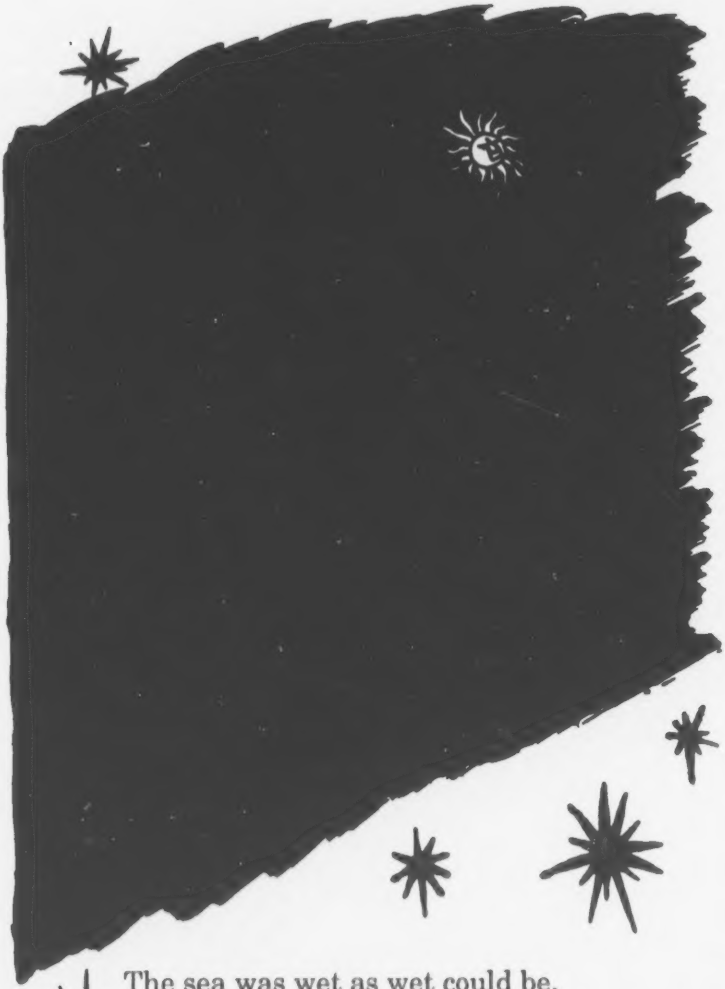
The sun was shining on the sea,
    Shining with all his might;
He did his very best to make
    The billows smooth and bright—
And this was odd, because it was
    The middle of the night.

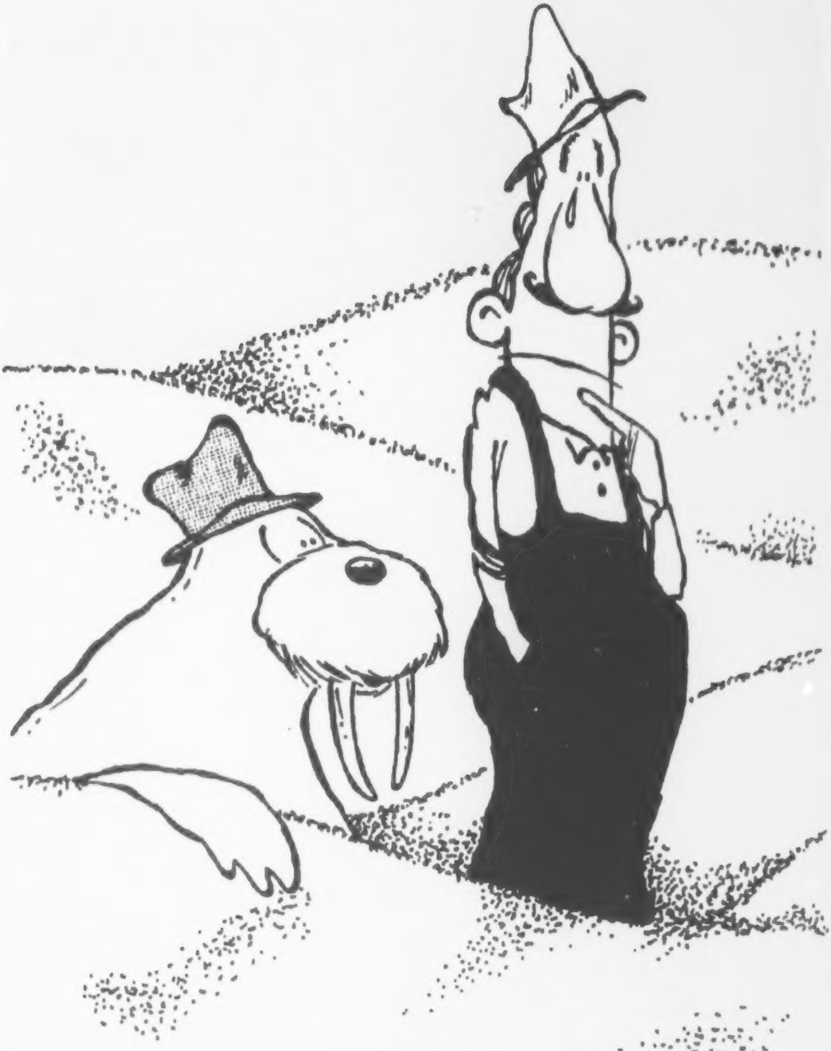


The moon was shining sulkily,
  Because she thought the sun
Had got no business to be there
  After the day was done—
"It's very rude of him," she said,
  "To come and spoil the fun!"



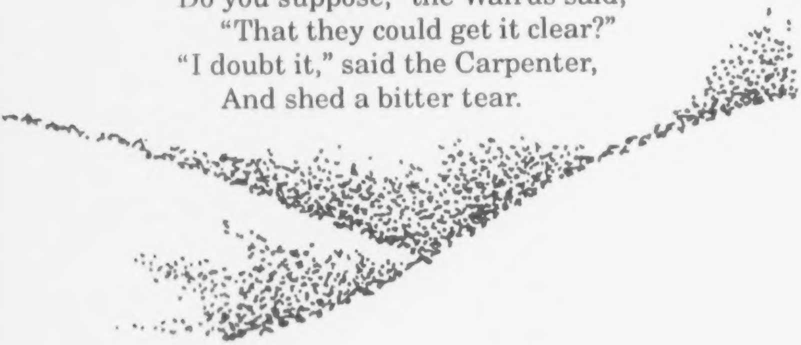


The sea was wet as wet could be,
The sands were dry as dry.
You could not see a cloud, because
No cloud was in the sky;
No birds were flying overhead—
There were no birds to fly.

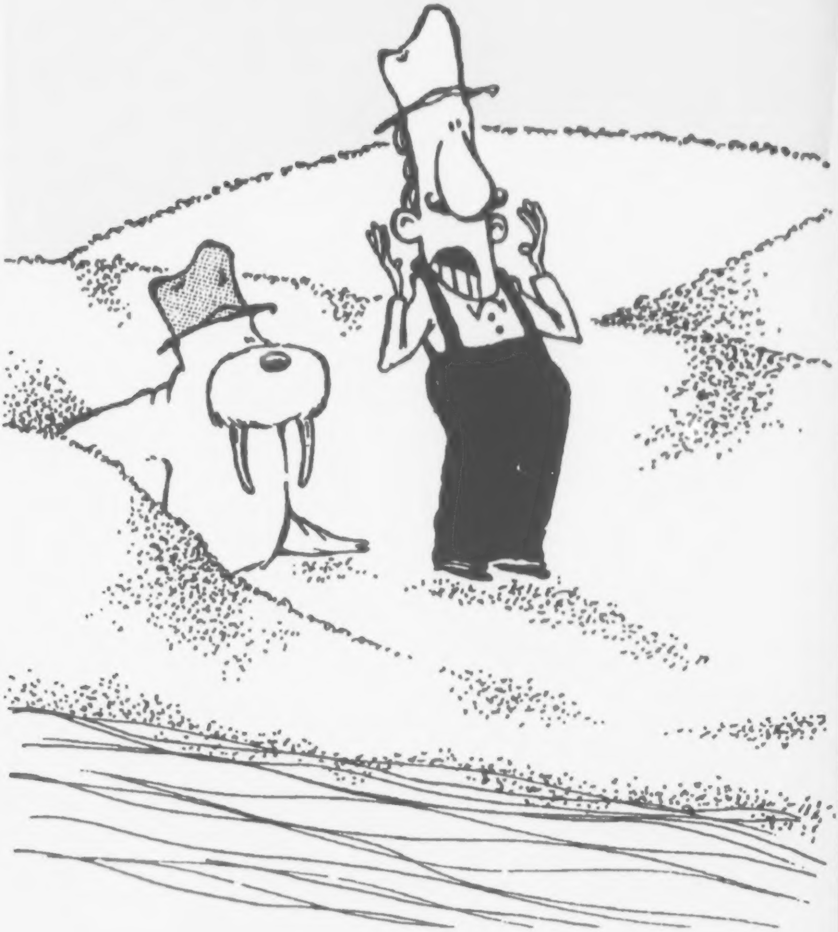


The Walrus and the Carpenter
Were walking close at hand;
They wept like anything to see
Such quantities of sand:
"If this were only cleared away,"
They said, "it would be grand!"

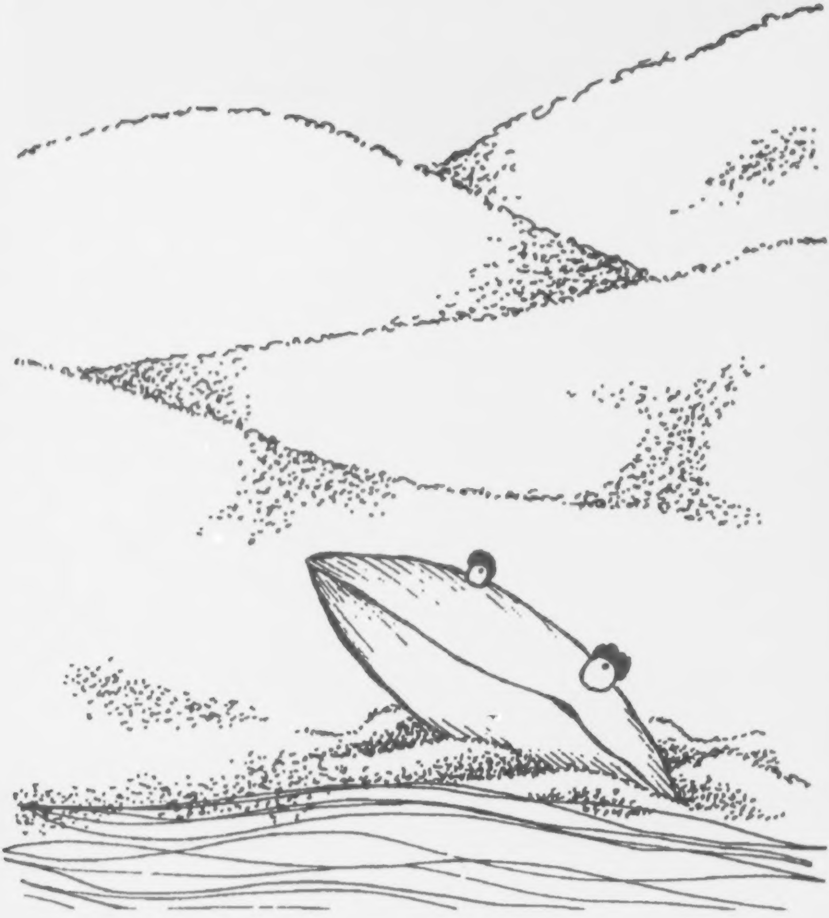
"If seven maids with seven mops
Swept it for half a year,
Do you suppose," the Walrus said,
"That they could get it clear?"
"I doubt it," said the Carpenter,
And shed a bitter tear.



“O Oysters, come and walk with us!”
The Walrus did beseech.
“A pleasant walk, a pleasant talk,
Along the briny beach;
We cannot do with more than four,
To give a hand to each.”



The eldest Oyster looked at him,
    But never a word he said
The eldest Oyster winked his eye,
    And shook his heavy head—
Meaning to say he did not choose
    To leave the oyster-bed.



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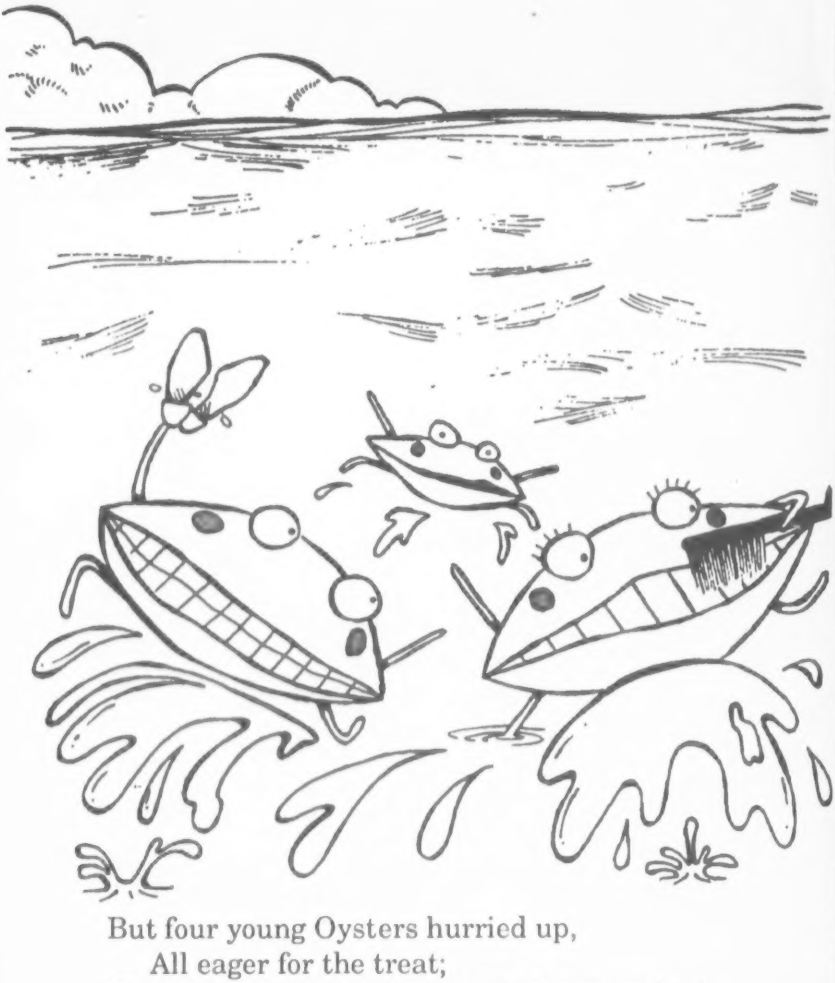

But four young Oysters hurried up,
  All eager for the treat;
Their coats were brushed, their faces washed,
  Their shoes were clean and neat—
And this was odd, because, you know,
  They hadn't any feet.

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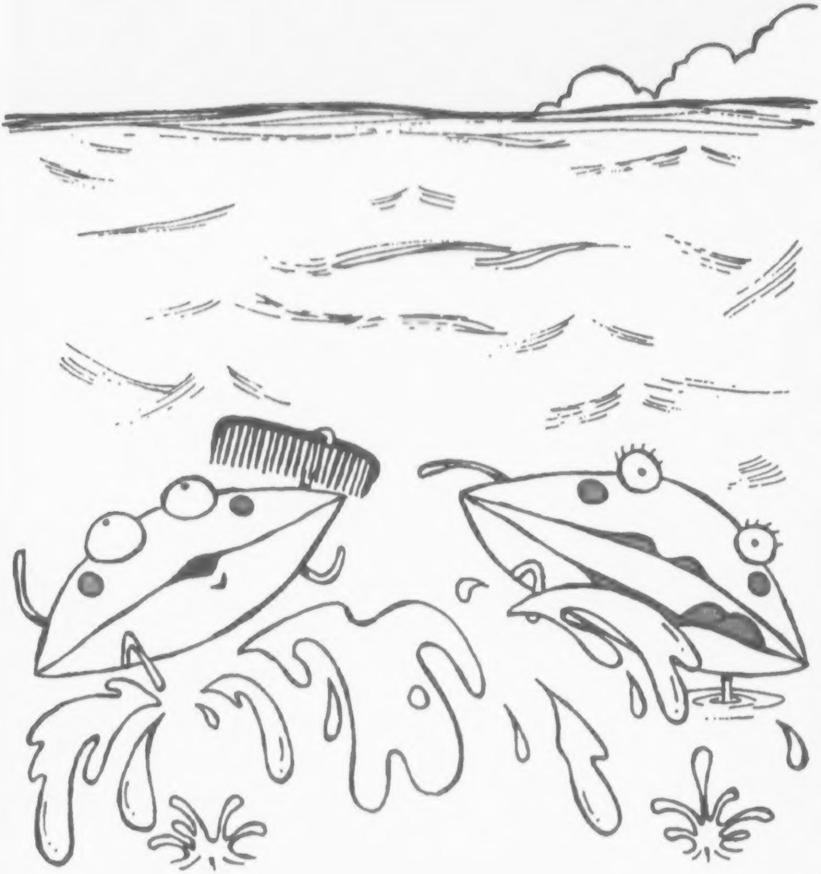
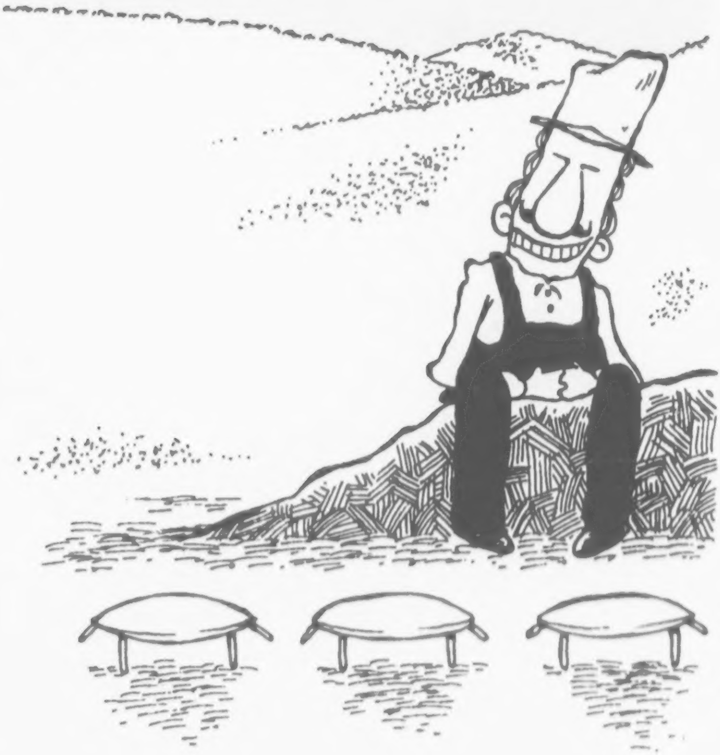
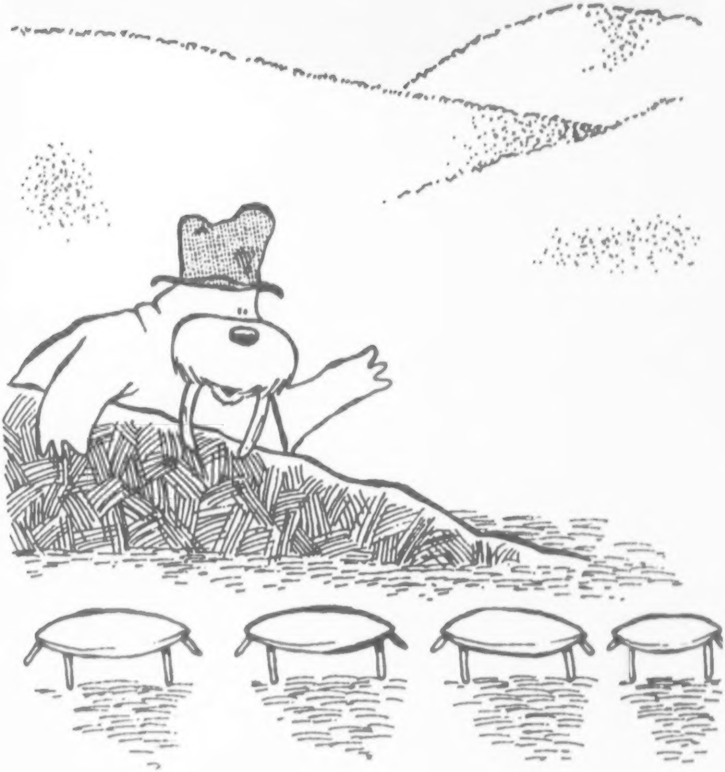


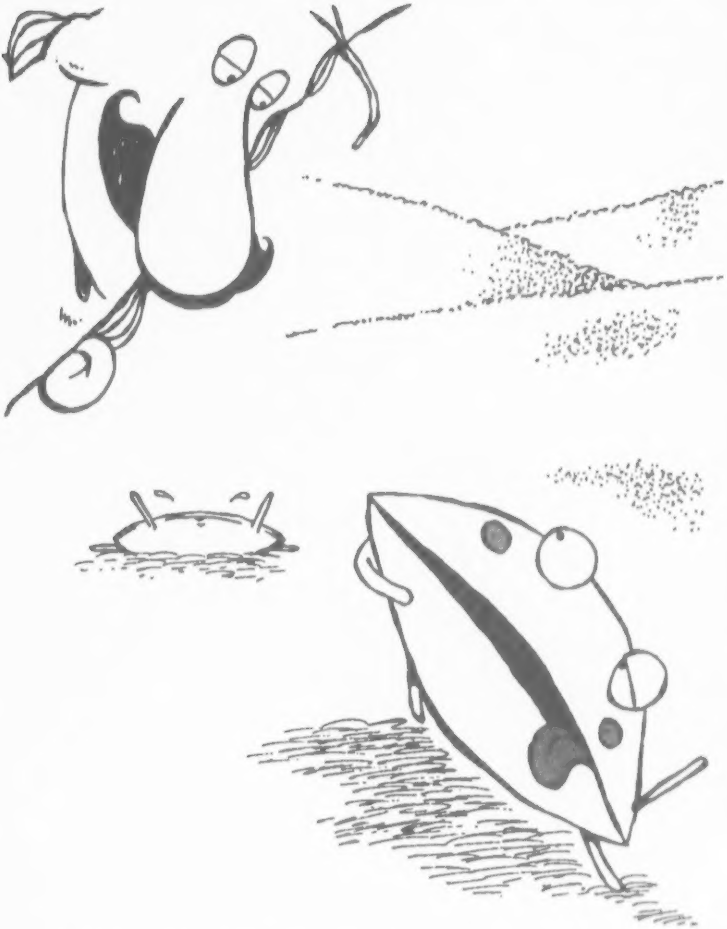
Four other Oysters followed them,
    And yet another four;
And thick and fast they came at last,
    And more, and more, and more—
All hopping through the frothy waves,
    And scrambling to the shore.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Walked on a mile or so,
And then they rested on a rock
Conveniently low:
And all the little Oysters stood
And waited in a row.

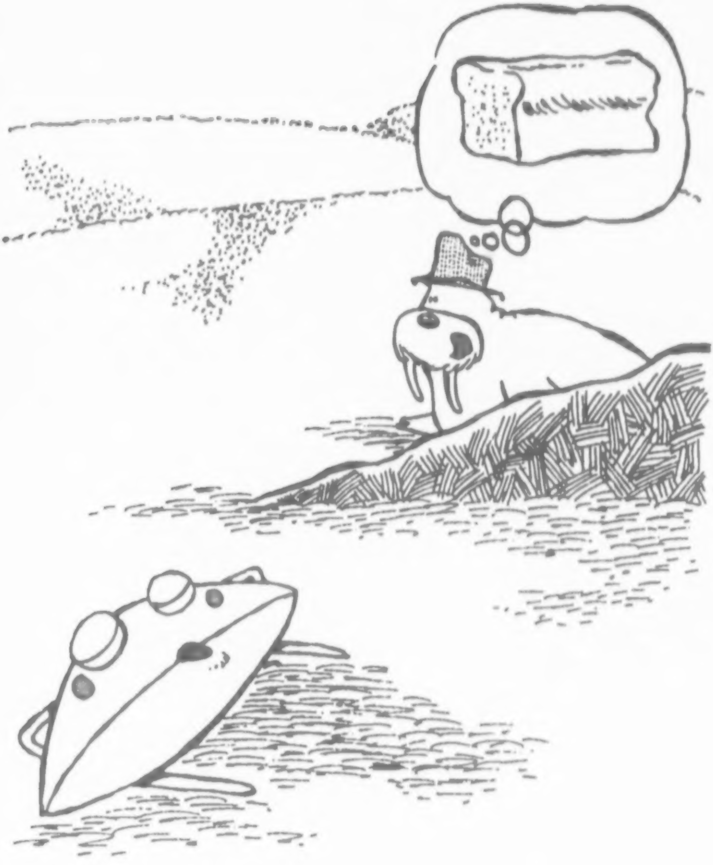


"The time has come," the Walrus said,
    "To talk of many things:
Of shoes—and ships—and sealing-wax—
    Of cabbages—and kings—
And why the sea is boiling hot—
    And whether pigs have wings."





“But wait a bit,” the Oysters cried,
“Before we have our chat;
For some of us are out of breath,
And all of us are fat!”
“No hurry!” said the Carpenter.
They thanked him much for that.



"A loaf of bread," the Walrus said,
"Is what we chiefly need;
Pepper and vinegar besides
Are very good indeed—
Now, if you're ready, Oysters dear,
We can begin to feed."

"But not on us!" the Oysters cried,
Turning a little blue.
"After such kindness that would be
A dismal thing to do!"
"The night is fine," the Walrus said.
"Do you admire the view?

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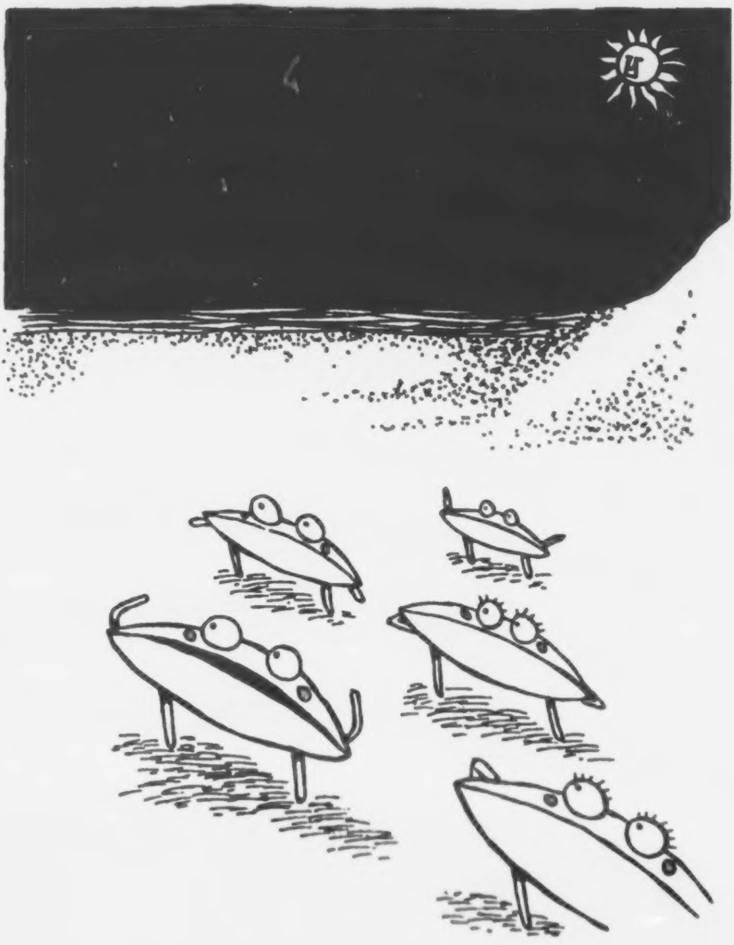
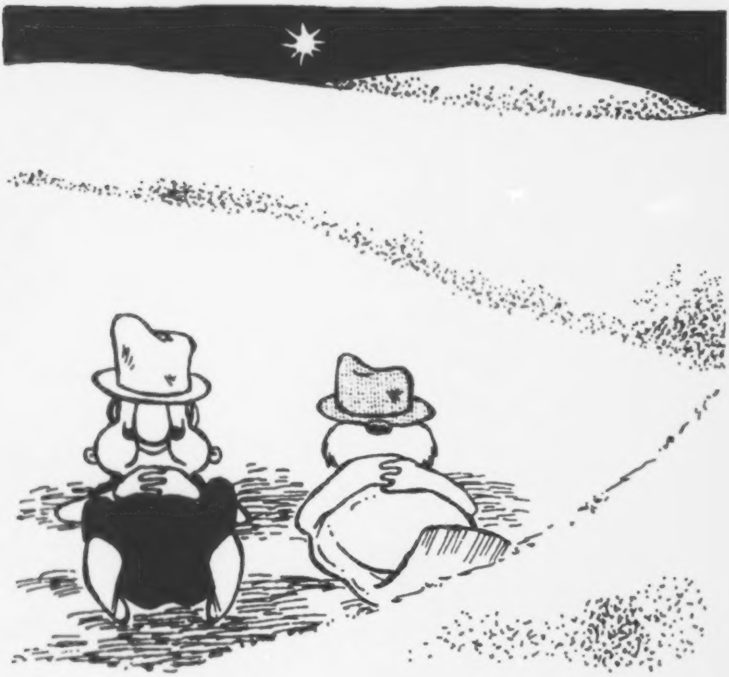
"It was so kind of you to come!
    And you are very nice!"
The Carpenter said nothing but:
    "Cut us another slice.
I wish you were not quite so deaf—
    I've had to ask you twice!"



"It seems a shame," the Walrus said,
"To play them such a trick,
After we've brought them out so far,
And made them trot so quick!"
The Carpenter said nothing but,
"The butter's spread too thick!"



"I weep for you," the Walrus said;
"I deeply sympathize."
With sobs and tears he sorted out
Those of the largest size,
Holding his pocket-handkerchief
Before his streaming eyes.

674

"O Oysters," said the Carpenter,
    "You've had a pleasant run!
Shall we be trotting home again?"
    But answer came there none—
And this was scarcely odd, because
    They'd eaten every one.

Things to do *after* reading the poem

The Walrus and the Carpenter tricked the oysters into becoming their meal. Do you think it is fair to play tricks on people? How can you have fun doing pranks and not hurt others? Share some of the funny tricks you know or have had played on you.

We hope you have had fun with these poems!

ATTENTION ALL WRITERS!

Announcing a Writing Contest

In our August 1992 issue, "Expressing Yourself through Writing," we will publish three stories from our readers. Have your child submit a story now.

Contest Rules:

1. All contest entires have to be the original work of a *Parents and Children Together* reader, not older than 12 years of age.
2. All contest entries have to be sent with permission of a parent, teacher, or guardian saying that the story was written by the child, or at most, only minor assistance was given.
3. Make sure your name, age, full address, and title of your story are on the first page of your contest entry.

The deadline for entries is April 1, 1992.

Books of Special Interest to Parents

How Can I Prepare My Young Child for Reading? by Paula C. Grinnell. Presents ideas to assist parents in preparing their children for reading. Focuses on children from birth through kindergarten. ($1.75)

You Can Help Your Young Child with Writing, by Marcia Baghban. Suggests methods parents can use to help develop their children's writing at home. Offers writing and reading activities. ($1.75)

Beginning Literacy and Your Child, by Steven B. Silvern and Linda R. Silvern. Recommends ways parents can participate in the development of their children's literacy. Provides activities for talking, reading, writing, and listening. ($1.75)

Helping Your Child Become a Reader, by Nancy L. Roser. Provides suggestions for parents to help them encourage their children to read. Offers several practical activities for parents. ($1.75)

Creating Readers and Writers, by Susan Mandel Glazer. Suggests that parents: (1) encourage the use of language; (2) build positive attitudes toward reading, writing, and speaking; and (3) demonstrate the purposes of literacy. Includes book suggestions classified by age groups. ($1.75)

You Can Encourage Your High School Student to Read, by Jamie Myers. Offers practical ideas parents can use to encourage their teenagers to read more. Shows how reading can serve adolescents' needs, and presents future needs that reading can fulfill. ($1.75)

Your Child's Vision Is Important by Caroline Beverstock. Discusses how vision affects school work, how different eye problems affect vision, and how to spot vision problems. Includes suggestions for dealing with vision difficulties. ($1.75)

Encouraging Your Junior High Student to Read, by John L. Shefelbine. Discusses why reading for pleasure is important. Suggests how to find time for reading, gather a variety of reading materials, and help a child who has difficulty reading. ($1.75)

101 Ideas to Help Your Child Learn to Read and Write, by Mary and Richard Behm. Ideas are presented to help parents use resources from around the home to promote literacy. The activities are educationally sound and fun for the parent and child to do together. ($6.50)

Subscription Rates

Quantity discounts are available for 20 or more copies. The journal is also available without the audio cassette for $5 per issue, or $55 for a one-year subscription.

Quantity

Parents and Children Together

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Submissions Policy for Stories and Articles for Parents and Children Together

Stories for Children and Parents:

1. Make the story fun for children—your primary audience. The adult reading along will enjoy the story if the child does.
2. Make sure that your story is acceptable to parents. We do not want parents to reject the story because it is inappropriate for their children. Writing a story that is interesting to children and at the same time pleasing to parents is a big challenge.
3. Your story should be no longer than eight double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.
4. Correct grammar and syntax are important. For the most part we choose to model correct standard English.
5. Be careful about the vocabulary you use in your story. Rule out really long and difficult-to-pronounce words. Use "plain" English, when you can—words that have English roots rather than French or Latin ones.
6. Make your stories gender inclusive. Do not use sexist terminology or ideas. Our stories must be interesting to both boys and girls.
7. You may illustrate your own story, but they must be line drawings in pen and ink only. The drawings must be able to be scanned, so please avoid excessive detail.

Articles for Parents:

1. Articles should contain practical information and helpful strategies. Anecdotes and other experiences modeling useful learning methods are particularly desirable.
2. Your article should be no longer than four double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.

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Using the Library
Earth Day/Environment
Different Cultures
Improving Your Child's Memory
Art Education
Expressing Yourself through Writing
Speaking and Listening Skills
American History
Collaborative Learning
Developing Your Child's Vocabulary

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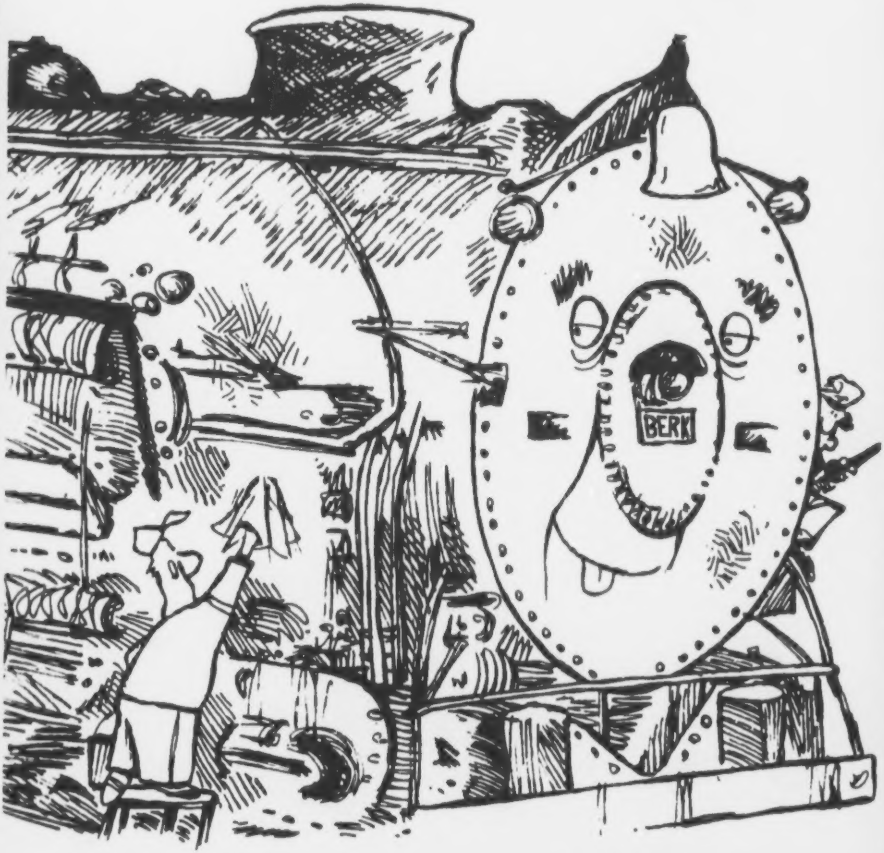
March 1992

Parents and Children Together

Using the Library



Read-along Stories:

Balloon Day

Tiger Paws and Old Berk

My Sister, the Snake, and I

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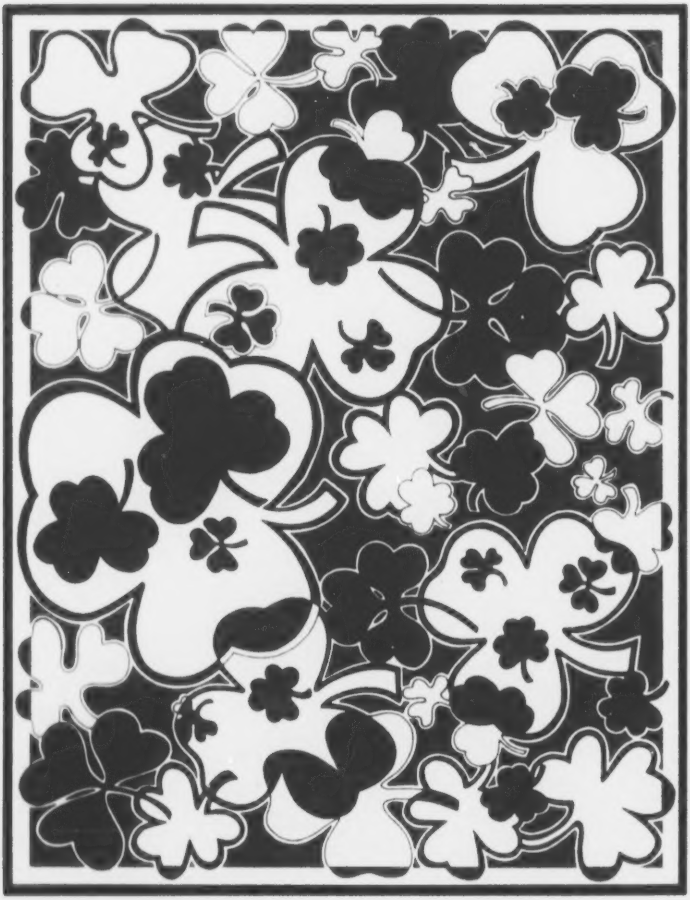
This booklet has a companion audio tape on "Using the Library." Occasionally there are directions on the tape that do not appear in the booklet or headings in the booklet that aren't spoken on the tape.



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PUBLIC
LIBRARY

Getting Started

Welcome to this month's issue of *Parents and Children Together.* We feature libraries in this issue, and discuss ways in which you can help your child utilize the library and learn from experiences there. On side B of the tape (and in the second half of the booklet) we have three read-along stories. We encourage you to listen to these stories and to read them with your children, so that they may participate in the excitement of story reading. Of course, your child can also listen to the stories alone, if you wish.

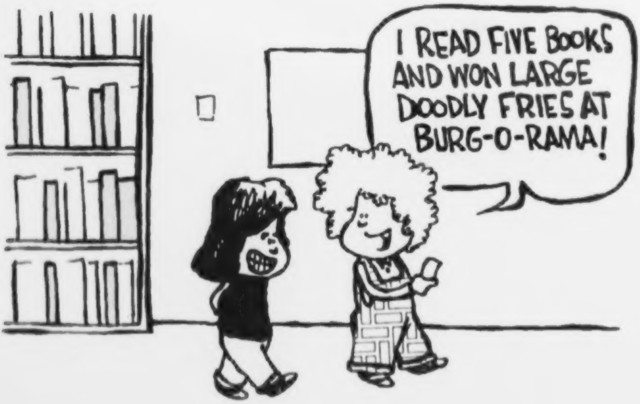
WELCOME ...TO THE LIBRARY!

Using the Library

As you may know, some adults use the public library a lot and some don't use it at all. That fact may not worry you, but there is a hidden message about adult library users that is valuable for parents to know. Our reading and library habits as adults seem to grow out of the experiences we had as children. That's right, regular reading and regular use of the library by adults stems from early use of the library as children. Recent studies of adult reading habits remind us of the powerful influence early reading experiences have on us.

PRIZES
DROP

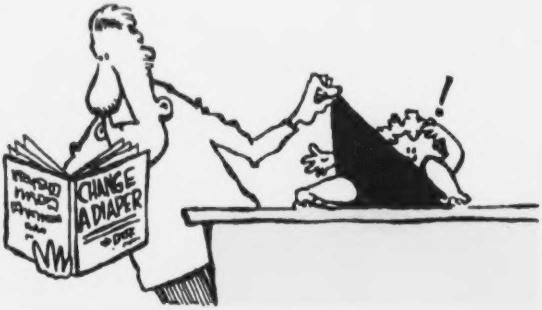
In a study of summer library use, researchers found some low-achieving students reading books all summer, contrary to expectations. Why did these poor readers keep reading at the library? Two major reasons: the library offered prizes (food coupons and movie passes) to children who read a certain number of books, and most importantly, the parents of these low-achieving readers insisted that they participate in the library summer reading program.


I READ FIVE BOOKS AND WON LARGE DOODLY FRIES AT BURG-O-RAMA!

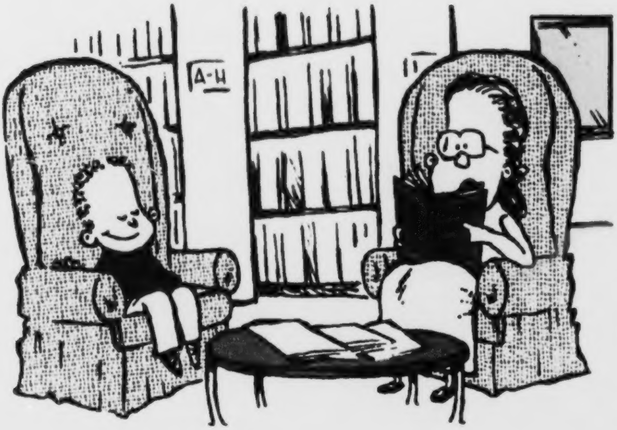
This study of a summer library program shows that if parents encourage their children to read, the children are likely to appreciate the value of books early on in their lives. If parents encourage their children to use the library as a resource, they are likely to view the library as an asset they can draw upon. The world of information in the library then becomes a treasure they can use the rest of their lives.

Libraries Reach Out

Libraries are becoming more attentive to the needs of modern society. A New York City Library opened an Early Childhood Resource and Information Center for children (ages 0-7), and their caregivers. For the convenience of its users, the Center made it a priority to install a diaper–changing station.



The librarians at these libraries combined their own experience and their knowledge of early literacy to implement a program just for parents and very young children. They built a space in the library that enabled parents and young children to share books together and to get help from librarians on selecting appropriate material. This same early childhood space made it possible for parents with limited English to practice their reading by using picture books with only a few words. Books with predictable phrases and sentences and books with word patterns, such as the Dr. Seuss books, were treasured by adults almost as much as they were by young children.



Librarians have a tradition of holding story hours for children in which they read some of their favorite stories. More and more, parents are being encouraged to read stories to their children by using the nooks and corners of the Children's Department as their own story corners.

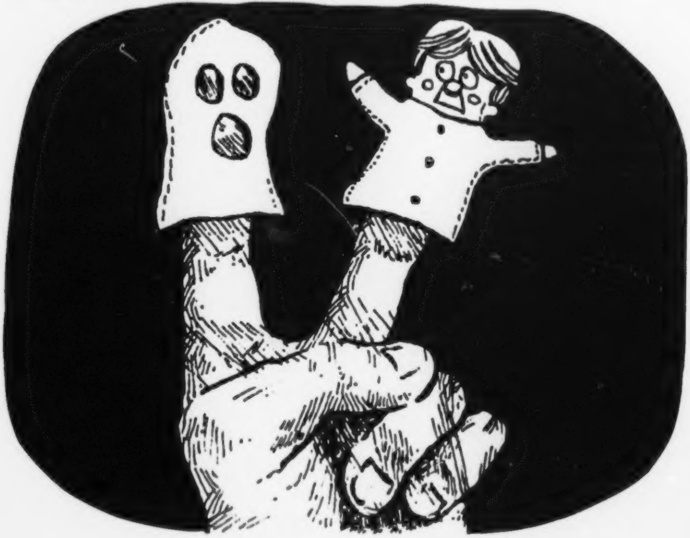
A benefit of summer library programs is that the children who use them return to school in the fall with stronger reading skills than those who did not read much during the summer. If the library offers rewards to children for reading books, accept them graciously. Even though you may think that children should read books just for the joy of reading, your goal is to encourage them to read regularly. If rewards do that, let them roll. Once children begin to read regularly, they have a much better chance of becoming the habitual readers who succeed in school and in the jobs of the future.

Library Services for Preschoolers

In case you are wondering what the library offers besides stacks of books, here are a few examples of services that you can find for preschoolers:

Many libraries have records and games that show you how to stimulate your child's language development through songs, games, and activities. The Children's Department will have lists of books on child rearing and parenting, as well as information about programs that the library organizes in these areas.

Special demonstrations are offered to help parents learn how to use finger-plays, songs, rhymes, and other activities that stimulate language development, vocabulary, and concepts that are helpful in school.

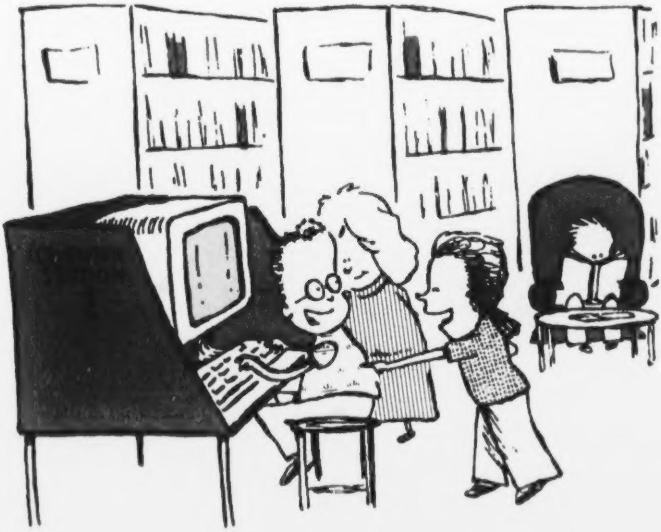


Children can often engage in activities such as listening to stories, watching films, doing arts and crafts work, and watching puppet shows, while their parents are using the library.

Be sure to take advantage of all the benefits that the library offers you as a parent of young children. As we have already mentioned, the long-term benefits for your child are immeasurable.

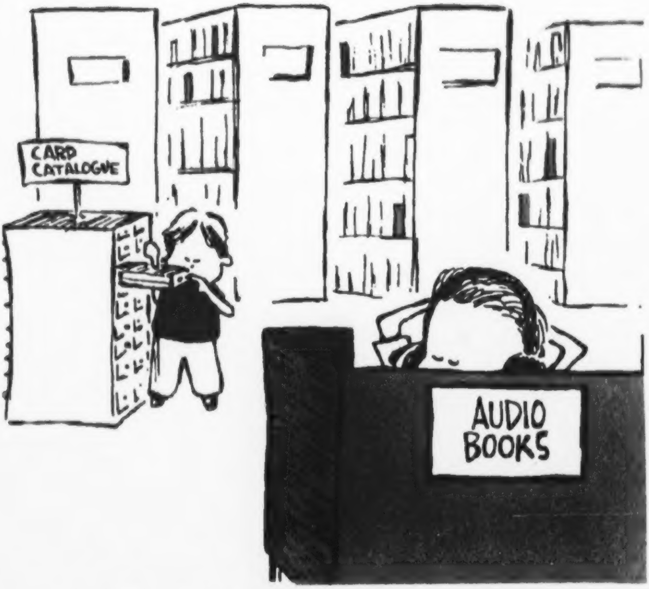
Library Services for School-age Children

Once your children are in school, the library becomes even more important. The public and school library then become an extension of the classroom. Although there are activities that encourage children to write and to participate in creative drama at the library, it is the information resources of the library that give children the power to learn beyond the limits of classroom activities.



Good teachers regularly challenge their students to use the library and other resources to expand classroom learning. Some expanded learning might be called recreational reading—reading for fun—but other learning involves children in finding topics that interest them and in becoming experts in those subjects.

Computers and information programs are frequently available at libraries. They give children an opportunity to search for answers to their questions and to solve problems by gathering information that will make them informed decision-makers.



Gifted and talented youngsters can enjoy the benefits of the library by joining discussion groups or by using the library as a warehouse of information to explore the ideas that are interesting to them. Children with physical or mental impairments may also benefit from special resources, such as books on tape and Braille print books, magazines, and comic books that are usually available free of charge.

Many libraries have tutors available or homework "helplines" for students to ask questions about their assignments. It is also common for libraries to house the local adult literacy program. So, if people need help with their literacy skills, this is probably the first place to go.

Parents' Resolutions

As you think about using the library to help your children become better readers and more effective students, it might be a good idea to rehearse in your mind the kinds of statements that you want to make about yourself as a way of being a model for your children. You may even want to print some of these statements on 3" x 5" cards as reminders of what you can do to help your children. Try some of the following statements to see if they represent your way of thinking:

- I have a library card and I get one for each of my children.
- I take my children to the library regularly.
- I make each trip to the library an exciting discovery.

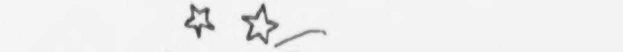
- I make a special effort to read with my children.
- I help my children find books that they can bring home.
- I respect the choices of books that my children make.
- While my children are exploring the library, I spend time searching for books that fit my own needs.
- I am a model for my children.

When parents, teachers, and librarians work together, the literacy skills of their children are bound to improve and everyone will end up a winner.

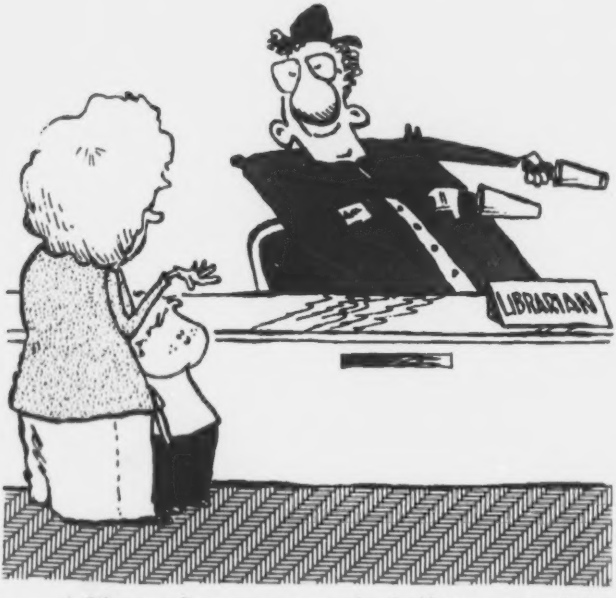
Questions about the Library

If parents have not used a library frequently, sometimes it seems confusing. We would like to answer a few questions you might have concerning a library. These suggestions could make your next trip to a library more productive and enjoyable.

I don't feel confident taking my child to the library. What do I need to know or understand about helping my child use the library?

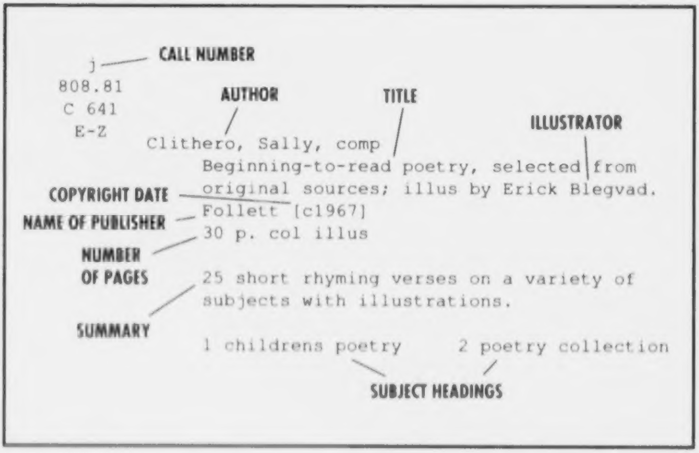

AUDIO VISUAL..... 1A
CHILDREN'S DEPT... 2B
COMPUTERS.....2C
FICTION......1C
YOUNG ADULT... 1D
NON-FICTION... 1B
REFERENCE...2D
A B C D
1
A B C D
2

There is no need to be intimidated by the library. Once you are inside, you will see that many people are just browsing or reading. You can feel comfortable looking around until you locate the information desk or librarian. Librarians will be happy to direct you to the children's department or to a source that will help you locate the books you want.



A library keeps a record of all its materials. You can locate materials in a library by using a card catalog or a computer. Cards in a card catalog are located in a series of drawers that are arranged in alphabetical order by author, title, or subject.

If you are looking for a book by title and it begins with the word “A” or “The,” move to the next word in the title. For example, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* would be filed under “**T**.” Be sure to have a slip of paper and a pencil with you. When you locate the book you need, write down the NUMBER that appears on the top left hand corner of the catalog card, the title of the book, and the author. Notice the example we have provided for you below.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Clithero, Sally, comp
Beginning-to-read poetry, selected from original sources; illus by Erick Blegvad. Follett [c1967]
30 p. col illus

25 short rhyming verses on a variety of subjects with illustrations.

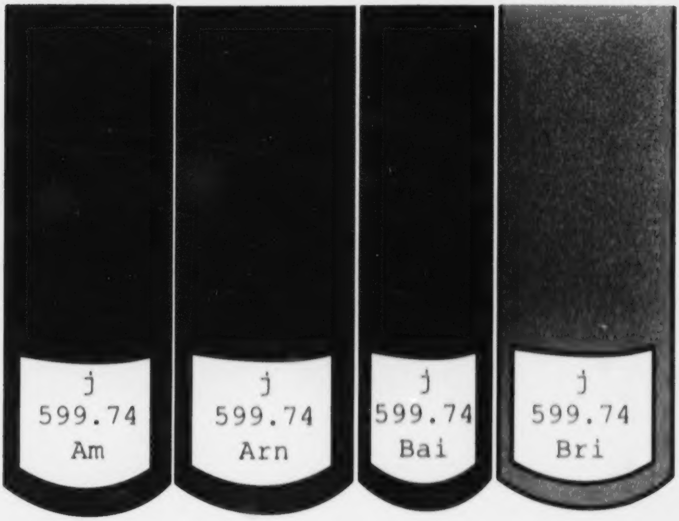
1 childrens poetry 2 poetry collection
CALL NUMBER
AUTHOR
TITLE
ILLUSTRATOR
COPYRIGHT DATE
NAME OF PUBLISHER
NUMBER OF PAGES
SUMMARY
SUBJECT HEADINGS

Some libraries have their catalog on computers. If your library has such a system, ask your librarian to show you how to use the computer to retrieve the information for which you are searching. Books are listed by author, title, or subject in the computer, also. Once you have used the computer to find books, you will see how much faster and easier it is to use than a card catalog.

NO WAY! KEEP LOOKING, DAD!
THE ART OF MOWING THE LAWN

Practice using the information you have learned. Make a trip to your library just to learn more about it. Pick a topic in which you and your child are interested. See what books you can find in the card catalog on this topic. Not only are you learning more about the library, but by including your child in this search process, you are helping your child learn how to use the library.

Once you and your child have found the information you want from the card catalog or computer, you should look for the book on the shelf. Typically, books are arranged in two ways. FICTION books are arranged alphabetically by the first letter of the author's last name. A book by Sidney Sheldon, for instance, will be on the "S" shelf. NONFICTION books are arranged by the call number. Remember, a call number for the book is written in the upper left-hand corner of the card. This same number can be found on the outside of the book so that it can be located on the shelf. We have provided another example below to help you remember how different books are arranged in the library. You may find this picture helpful the next time you visit the library.



Another section of the library you should become familiar with is the reference area. Knowing how to find and use materials in this section will be helpful when your child is working on reports and term papers. The reference section of the library includes encyclopedias, atlases, government documents, and other types of information books. Reference books and documents in this section may not be checked out from the library.

YOUR LIBRARY

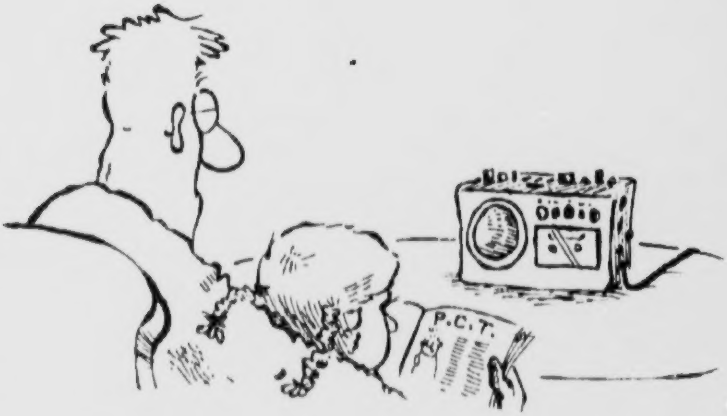
There is more to your library than just books! Many libraries have newspapers, magazines, videos, tapes, records, computer software, and much more. The library is a living encyclopedia of useful information and materials, both past and present. Plan to use it for more than just fiction books. And remember, don't be afraid to ask for help when using the library. If you ask your librarian for help the first few times, you will soon find that the library is very easy to use.

There are so many books in the children's section of the library. How do I know which books to choose?

Almost every children's librarian has lists of books to guide you. You may also want to look for award-winning books. There are two famous awards for children's literature made each year by the American Library Association. One is the Caldecott Medal for illustrations and the other is the Newbery Medal for writing.

These awards are given to only two of the approximately 2,500 new children's books published each year. Fortunately there are other lists of good books. For instance, *Notable Children's Books* by the American Library Association and *Books for Children* by the Library of Congress are lists of new books for preschool through junior high school-aged children. The International Reading Association (IRA) publishes annual lists of books that children, teachers, and young adults recommend for reading. There are some excellent books to guide parents in book selection, such as, *The New Read-Aloud Handbook* by Jim Trelease, *Comics to Classics: A Parent's Guide to Books for Teens and Preteens* by Arthea Reed, and *Eyeopeners* by Beverly Kobrin.

The children's librarian is trained to help you locate specific books that are good for reading aloud, as well as books on a particular subject recommended for a particular age group. In addition, your library may have several journals that regularly review children's books, including *The Horn Book*. Some of the family or parent magazines at the library, or the ones that you subscribe to at home, often recommend books for children. This audio magazine, for instance, lists books that match the monthly theme.

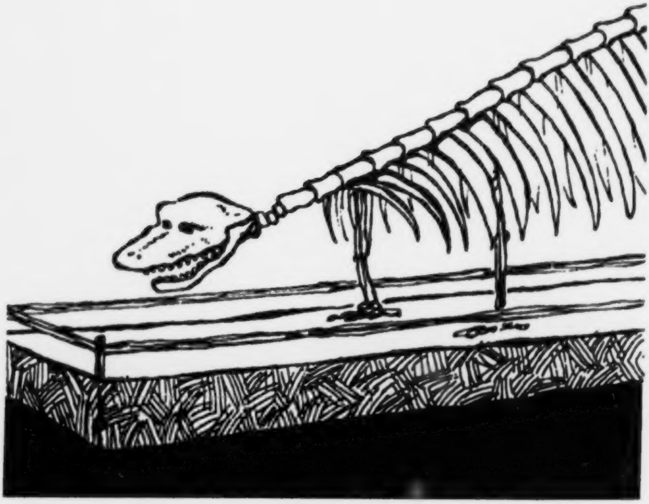


How can I help my child with school assignments, such as reports and term papers?

Very often children in school will ask their parents for help with library assignments. And very often parents will find themselves gradually taking over and doing a report for their son or daughter. Obviously, such an exercise offers no long-term benefit to your child. There are, however, things you can do to help your child with library assignments:

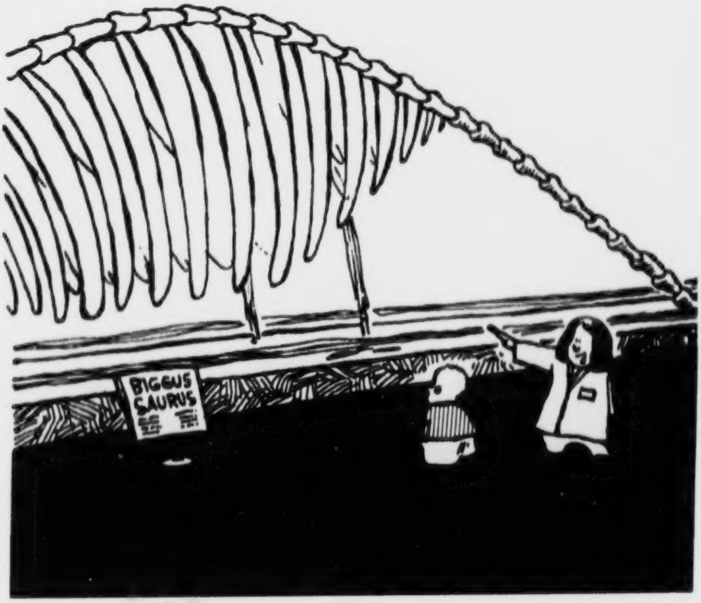
1) Ask your child questions about the assignment, and encourage him to ask the teacher questions. This helps him clarify what needs to be done. Help him identify the subtopic he is researching. For example, brontosaurus is a subgroup or smaller topic of dinosaurs, and dinosaurs is a subtopic of extinct animals. These classifications will help identify useful references.

2) Suggest that your child look up the topic in the library card catalog and in reference books. The librarian can also direct and help you get started. Be sure your child knows how to use a table of contents and an index. Suggest that she be prepared to look through or to use more than one source.



3) Help your child break assignments into logical segments and avoid last-minute panic by setting deadlines for each step of the work. Work together on setting up a schedule that allows plenty of time to gather needed materials.

4) Help your child decide if the community library has the resources he needs or if he should check other resources. He may want to talk to people who are experts on the topic; he may come up with ideas of his own as to where additional information can be obtained for the report.



5) Encourage your child to ask the librarian for help in locating materials. Help him gain confidence in using the library by letting him do his own talking when he needs help from the librarian.

6) Give your child encouragement, advice, and a ride if she needs it, but resist the temptation of taking over an assignment. Let her assume responsibility for researching and writing the report. It is the only way she will learn the library skills that she will need for the rest of her life.

Also, libraries frequently have workshops on how to do research or books reports. You may want to consider suggesting your child attend one of these workshops. But don't expect the library to fulfill your responsibilities as a parent.

If you have questions, please write to us and we will answer them for you. You may find your question in another issue of *Parents and Children Together*.

Write to:

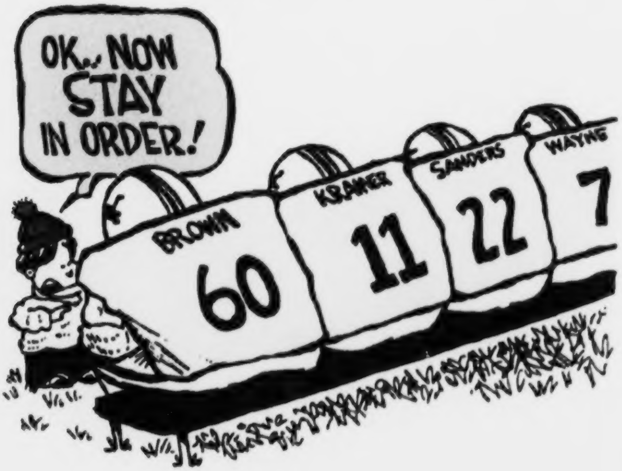
Editor, *Parents and Children Together*
Indiana University
2805 E. 10th Street, Suite 150
Bloomington, IN 47408-2698

Activities for Fun and Learning

Children usually enjoy learning when they participate in different activities. Use the following activities to help familiarize your children with a library and improve their library-related skills.

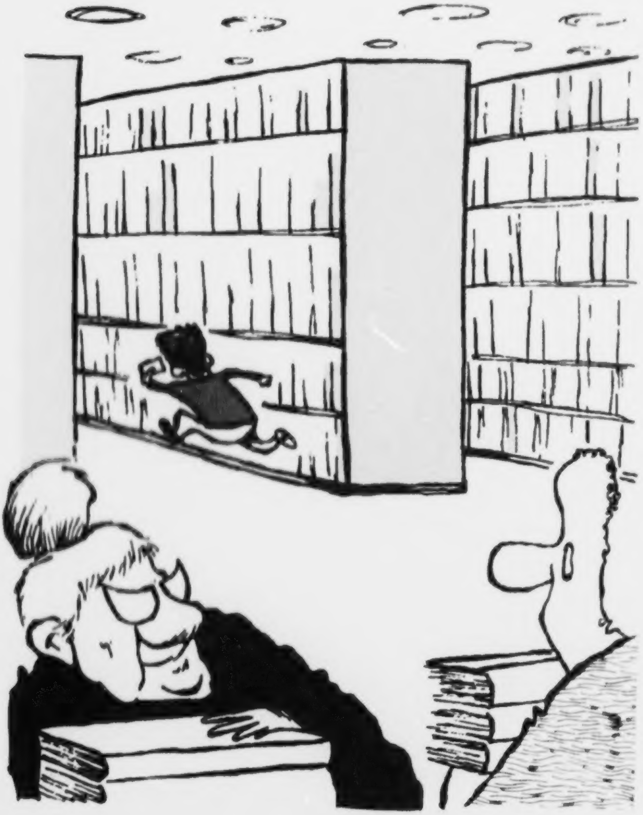
Alphabet Soup

- To practice alphabetizing, have your child make a list of items in a room, or favorite foods, the names of players on a team, friends, or family. Then help her put them in alphabetical order.

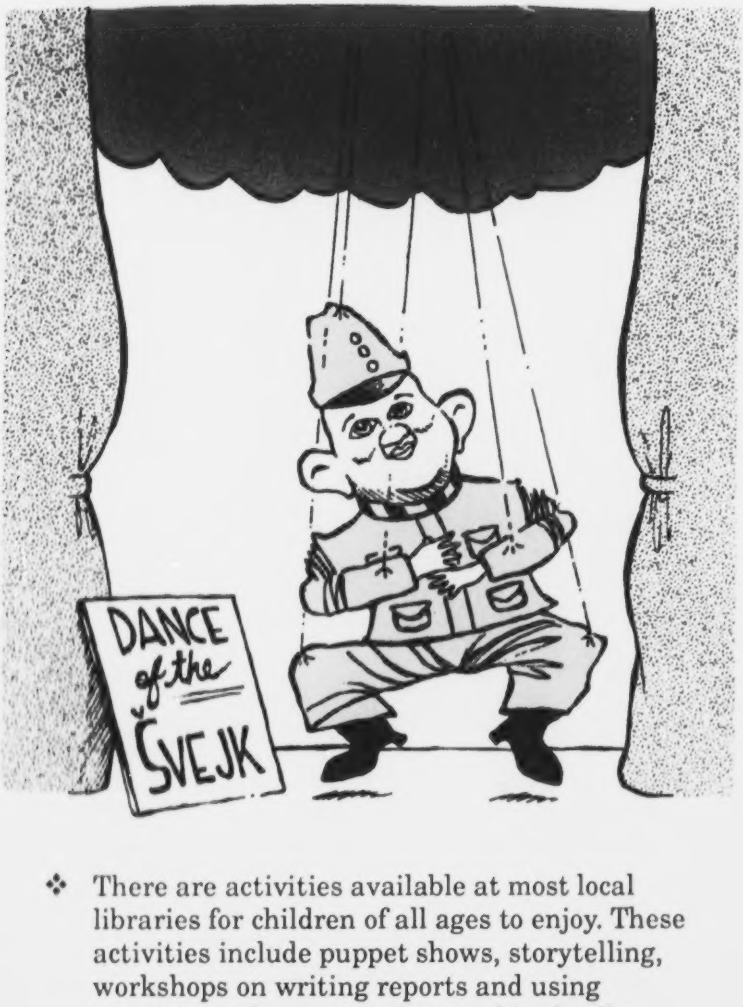

OK.. NOW STAY IN ORDER!
BROWN
60
KRAMER
11
SANDERS
22
WAYNE
7

Scavenger Hunt

- At the library, select a title in the card catalog or on the computer, then show your child how to locate the item on the shelf. After he learns how to do this, challenge him to a game. Select a title and see if he can find it by himself. You may want to add a time limit as he improves.



Check It Out



- There are activities available at most local libraries for children of all ages to enjoy. These activities include puppet shows, storytelling, workshops on writing reports and using computers, demonstrations, and booktalks.

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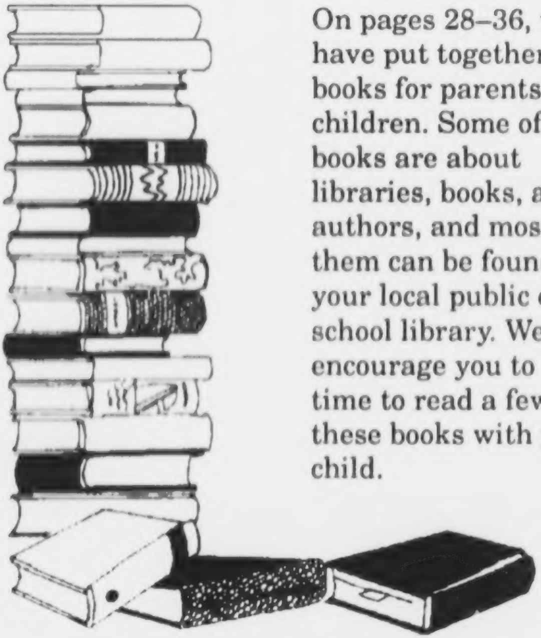
Books for Parents and Children



On pages 28–36, we have put together lists of books for parents and children. Some of the books are about libraries, books, and authors, and most of them can be found at your local public or school library. We encourage you to take time to read a few of these books with your child.

At the beginning of this issue, we mentioned that side B of the audio tape contains three stories that are designed to be read-along stories. You may want to take some time to look ahead at these stories before you read along with your child. It is also important to talk about the story ahead of time.

Before reading the story, talk about the title or things that might happen in the story. Then, after the story is finished, talk about it again. By the way, if in the middle of the story something funny or exciting happens, it's O.K. for you to stop the tape and discuss the event, or for you to ask your child questions such as "How does a steam engine work?" or "Have you ever touched a snake? Do you like snakes?" and then follow it up with a why or why not. These questions make your conversation about the story more natural and valuable.

When you and your child are ready, turn the tape to side B and listen to the stories as you read along together, or you may read the stories aloud while your child reads along in the booklet.

Resources for Parents

Building a Family Library, by Reading Is Fundamental, Inc. $0.50 single copy, $15 per 100. Offers ideas for creating an economical family library, including suggestions to help children build their own collections.

Helping Your Child Use the Library, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education. Presents information about the library, services provided for children of all ages and adults, and strategies parents can use to help their children at the library.

The New York Times Parent's Guide to the Best Books for Children, edited by Eden Ross Lipson (Random House). Surveys a selection of children's books grouped according to reading levels. Annotations include author, illustrator, publisher, major awards, plot summary, and recommendations. Includes special indexes to help guide the user in locating appropriate books.

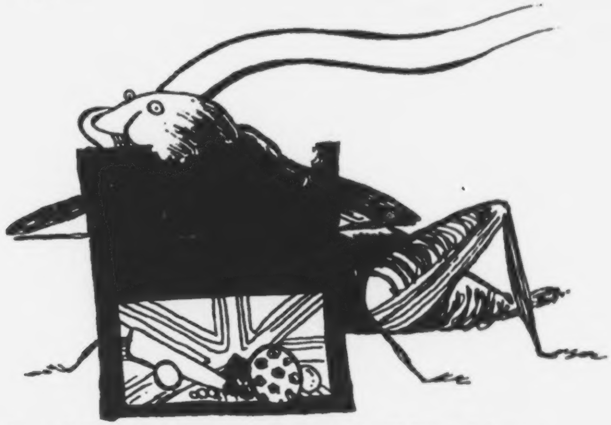
The Horn Book. Published six times a year, this journal has reviews, articles and special columns about the best new books for children and young adults. For information, write: The Horn Book, Inc., 31 St. James Avenue, Boston, MA 02116-4167.

Notable Children's Books. For the most recent annual list, send $0.30 to: American Library Association, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611.

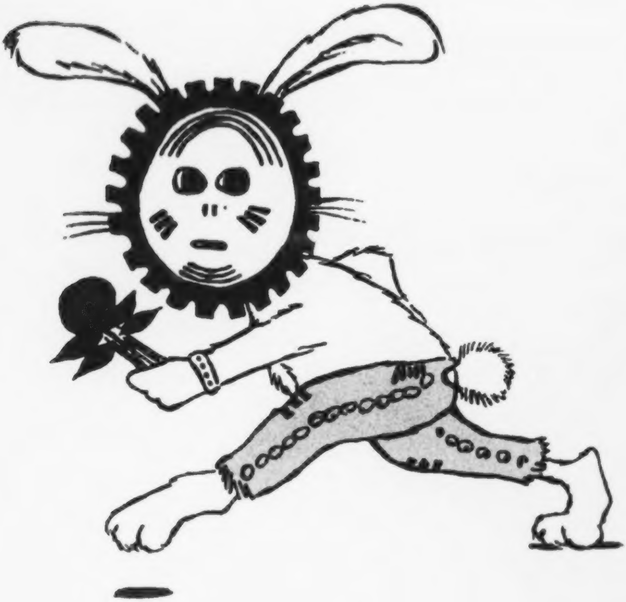
Books to Read Together

Ages 4-6

There's a Cricket in the Library, by several fifth-grade students of McKee Elementary School in Oakdale, PA (Willowisp Press). This little cricket discovers books are for reading and not eating. He packs his things and leaves the library after being told to be quiet.



Edward Lear's Nonsense ABCs, by Edward Lear (Running Press). A silly rhyme accompanies each letter of the alphabet. After you read the last letter, simply turn the book upside-down and start over again with new rhymes.



Ten Little Rabbits, by Virginia Grossman & Sylvia Long (Chronicle Books). Each number in this counting book displays an aspect of traditional Native American culture. Tribes represented include the Sioux, Tewa, Ute, Menominee, Blackfoot, Hopi, Arapaho, Nez Perce, Kwakiutl, and Navajo.

Ages 6-8

Good Books, Good Times, selected by Lee Bennett Hopkins. Entertaining illustrations accompany this collection of poems about books and the joy of reading.

716

Libraries, by Patricia Fujimoto (Childrens Press). Covers the historical development of libraries and provides information about different types. Explains the services offered by libraries and suggests ways to use the library to find answers.

Hot Off the Press: Getting the News into Print, by Ruth Crisman (Lerner). Describes the production of newspapers, from the publishing phase to delivery. Includes a glossary and a list of books for further reading.

EXTRA!! EXTRA!! READ ALL ABOUT IT!

Ages 8-10

Tracking the Facts: How to Develop Research Skills, by Claire McInerney (Lerner). Covers selecting a topic, using the library, interviewing, and computer searching. Also provides information on taking notes, organizing an outline, and writing up the research results.

Freedom of the Press, by J. Edward Evans (Lerner). Gives a history of the freedom and restraint of the press. Covers both the invention of the Gutenburg press and the Pentagon papers.

A Girl from Yamhill: A Memoir, by Beverly Cleary. This famous author describes growing up in Oregon. Covers Ms. Cleary's earliest memories until her departure for college. Children enjoy learning about this author who wrote the books featuring Ramona Quimby. Includes personal photographs.

Books for Your Children to Read by Themselves

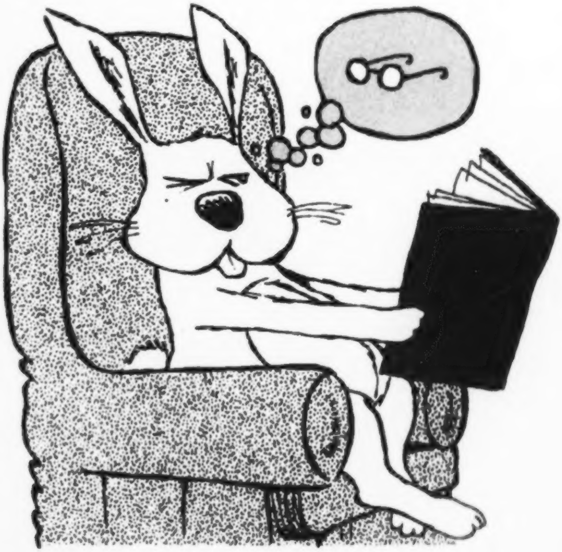
Ages 4-6

Blue Bug Goes to the Library, by Virginia Poulet (Childrens Press). Blue Bug tours the library and learns about different materials, activities, and resources. Minimum amount of text per page.

CARD
CATALOGUE

Left or Right? by Karl Rehm and Kay Koike (Clarion Books). Teaches the concept of left and right through photographs. The reader can look at a photo of a specific object and then determine if that object is on the left or right in another more detailed photograph.

What Can Rabbit See? by Lucy Cousins (Tambourine Books). Find all of the things Rabbit can see when he puts on his glasses. Each discovery is revealed by lifting a flap in the book.



Ages 6-8

A Visit to the Library, by Sylvia Root Tester (Childrens Press). Follows a group of children on a tour of their local library. Introduces the use of library cards and care of books. Presents a variety of resources and activities that a library offers.

Dear Annie, by Judith Caseley (Greenwillow). Grandpa sent Annie a card when she was born. Now Annie and her Grandpa are pen pals. They share their love for each other by sending cards and writing letters.

IS THAT PAGE 15? WHAT'S IT SUPPOSED TO BE?
BOOK/MARCH
P. 15

How a Book Is Made, by Aliki. Outlines the process of making and selling a book. Looks at the contributions of the author, illustrator, editor, publisher, designer, printer, salesperson, and many others.

Ages 8-10

Books and Libraries, by Jack Knowlton (HarperCollins). Illustrates the history and development of books and libraries from several early civilizations to the present.

Help Is on the Way for: Library Skills, by Marilyn Berry (Childrens Press). Presents common operations and functions of a library. Focuses on general library rules and using a library card and card catalog. Suggests methods to locate different types of information.

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Find It! The Inside Story at Your Library, by Claire McInerney (Lerner). Explains the various resources and services available in a library. Provides information about recreational reading, different types of media, location and proper use of materials, and conducting research for school reports. Also includes humorous cartoons with the text.

Magazines

Also ask your librarian for the following magazines:

Bear Essential News for Kids

Children's Album

Cricket

Highlights for Children

Lady Bug

Letterbug

Odyssey

Penny Power

Shoe Tree

Wombat: A Journal of Young People's Writing and Art

Read-along Stories

Balloon Day

by M. A. Crane

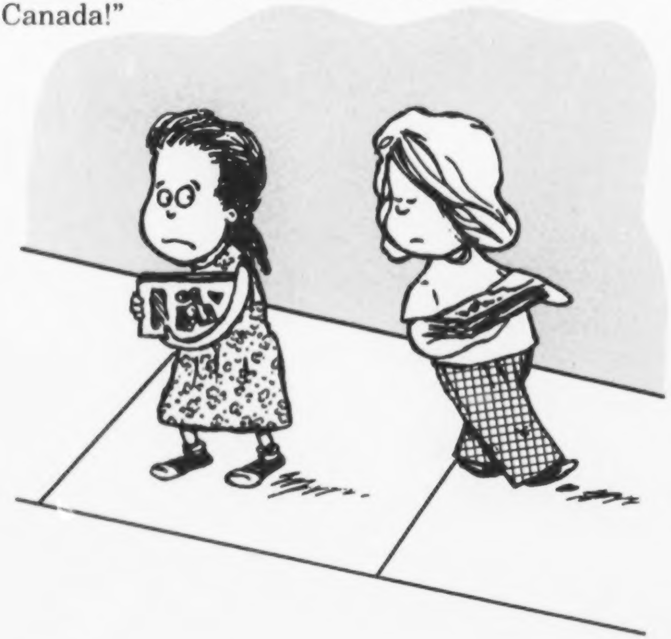
Things to do *before* reading the story

Talk about times when you have sent messages or letters to other people. Think about how you felt when someone replied to a message from you. See if your message-sending was anything like the little girl's card-sending experience in the story.

On Balloon Day, Cherry and her friend Josie Banks ran all the way to school. This was the day when the boys and girls who went to Edwards Elementary School sent hundreds of balloons winging into the sky. Attached to every balloon was a little card.

Cherry had filled out her card yesterday at school. "My name is Cherry Williams," she had written. "I live at 9 Billings Street in Edwards, Massachusetts. If you find my card and balloon, please mail the card back to me." Cherry's card also explained that she and her classmates learned to read maps and studied air and wind currents by charting the course the balloons took. The balloon that flew the farthest earned a prize for its owner.

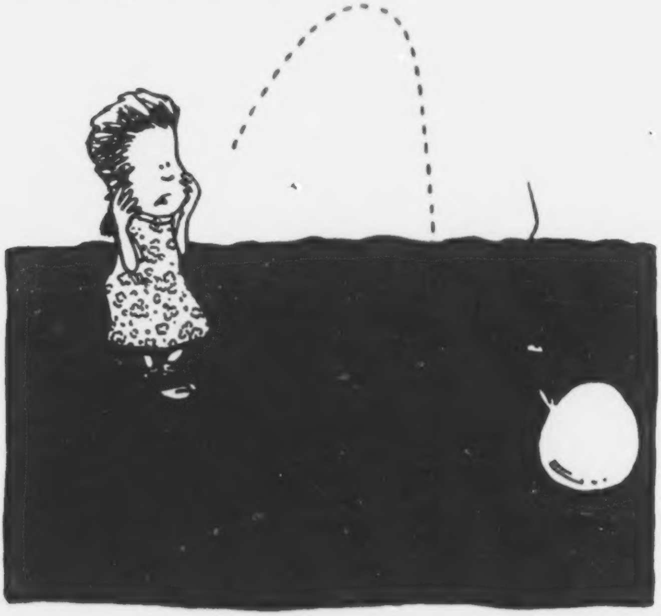
This year the prize was a transistor radio. "I hope I win," Josie panted as they raced around a corner. "Maybe my balloon will go as far as Canada!"



"I hope mine goes that far, too..." Cherry stopped short as she nearly collided with the girl who lived in the red house next to Edwards Elementary. Nobody knew the girl's name because she never spoke or waved or acted the least bit friendly ... and because she didn't go to Edwards Elementary but to a private school in Boston. Today she just gave Cherry a long, cold stare when Cherry said she was sorry. Boy, is she ever stuck-up, Cherry thought. She could at least have nodded her head or something.

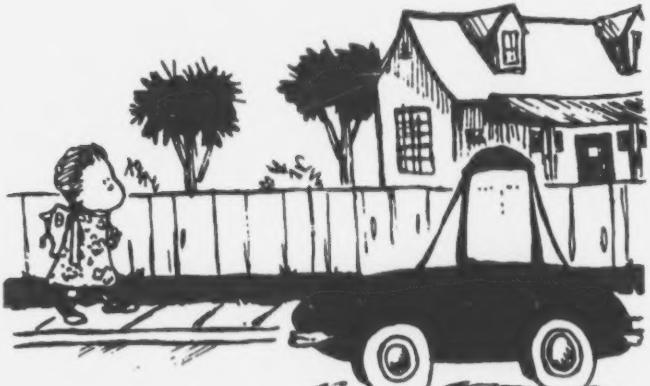
But Cherry soon forgot about everything but balloons. They were everywhere...red ones, blue ones, green, pink, and yellow ones. Cherry could hardly wait until after lunch when she could finally take her balloon and go outside to the playground. There she waited impatiently while Mr. Prichards, the principal, made a speech about how much fun Balloon Day was and how much he hoped everyone would learn about map reading and air currents. "I hope your balloons will all go very far," he said. And then he shouted, "One, two, three...let them fly!"

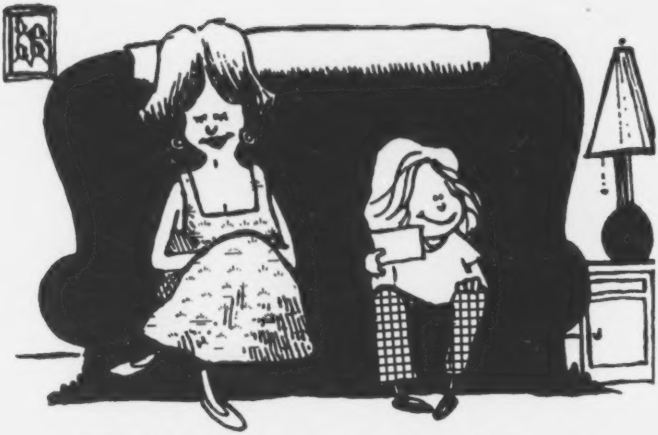
Cherry let go of her balloon. Would it get to Nova Scotia maybe, or Maine? Would it go someplace really special? Suddenly she gasped. Her balloon wasn't going up with the others. Hers was falling down, down, down!



Cherry's eyes smarted with tears as she saw it disappearing behind a clump of nearby trees. Josie tried to cheer her up, but it didn't do any good. All Cherry could think about was her pretty balloon caught in some tree where only the birds and squirrels could see it. Somewhere special, Cherry thought glumly. Well, maybe a bird can use it for a nest!

Cherry couldn't wait for school to end that day, and after school she walked home alone. Her friends could talk about nothing except balloons, and she was sick and tired of hearing about balloons. She didn't want to talk about them either, and she really dreaded going home and having to explain to Mom about her balloon. Then, as she slowly walked toward her house, she saw something that made her stop right in her tracks. There was a car parked in front of her house, a car she had seen many times before. It belonged to the stuck-up girl's family.





What's she doing at my house? Cherry wondered. She hurried indoors and was even more surprised to see Mom sitting in the living room with a tall lady. The stuck-up girl was sitting next to the lady, and she was holding something in her hands. Cherry saw that it was a small white card ... and the remains of a balloon.

"My balloon!" Cherry gasped.

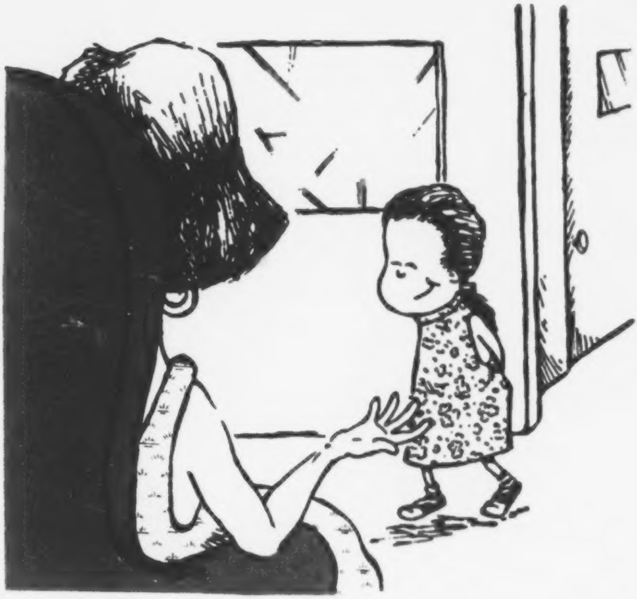
"Cherry, this is Mrs. Davies and her daughter Peggy," Mom said. "Your balloon landed on a Douglas fir in their backyard."

"Since we live so close-by, we brought the card instead of mailing it," Mrs. Davies added.

Cherry thanked her, though she didn't feel at all thankful. Of all the places to fall, her balloon had picked the worst. Then Cherry blinked ... because the stuck-up girl was smiling!

"Peggy was so excited about the balloon," Mrs. Davies said. "She's been watching you children for days, you know, wanting so much to be a part of Balloon Day." She looked a little sad. "You see, Peggy has to go to a special school just now. She was born with something wrong with her ears, and she can't hear very well. But we hope she will soon be able to go to Edwards Elementary." She smiled at Cherry. "If you talk slowly, she can understand what you say."

Cherry's eyes were wide with surprise, and understanding. That's why she never spoke to us, she thought, watching Peggy Davies smile. We spoke too fast for her to understand. Suddenly she felt happy, and excited, too ... as excited as she'd been this morning, before Balloon Day.



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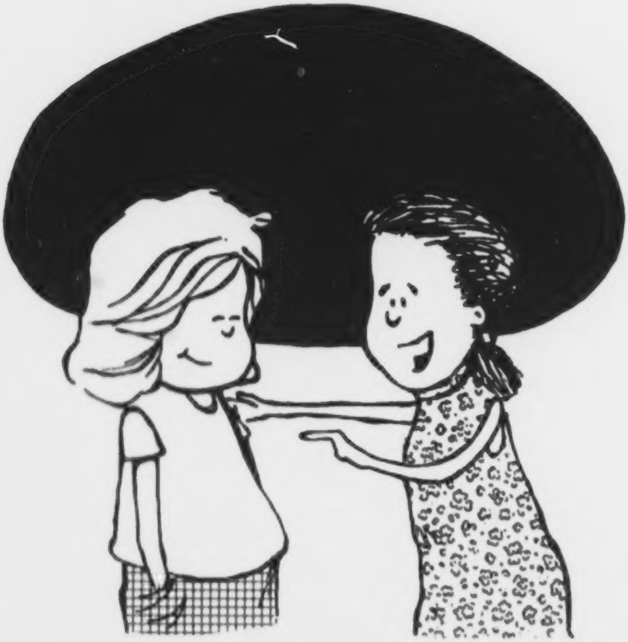
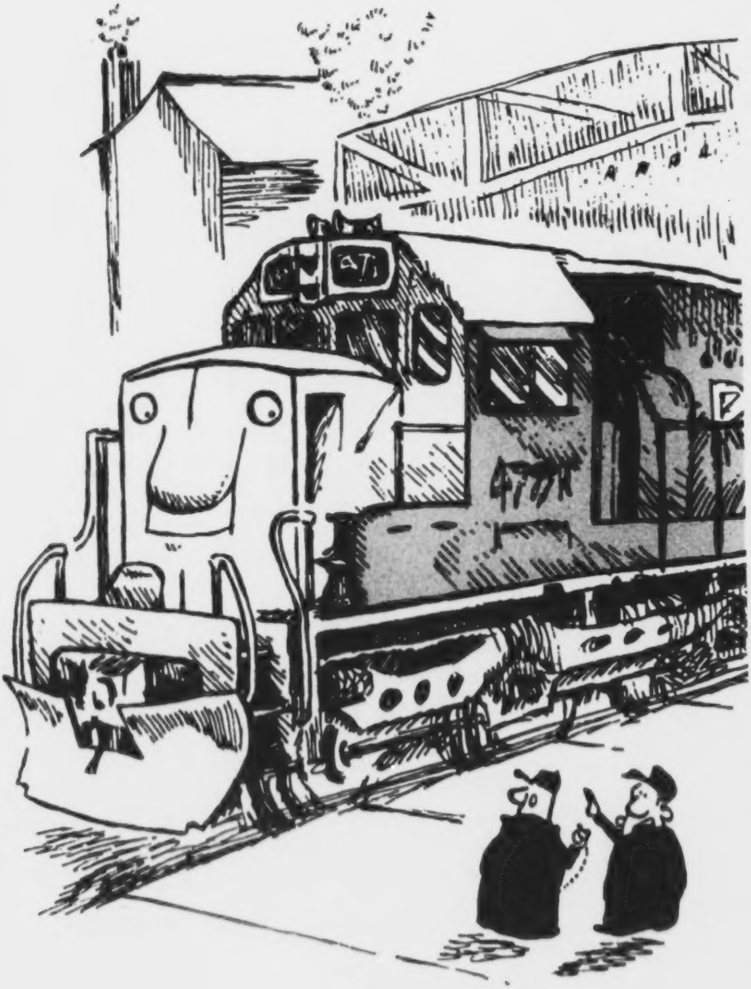
"I'm glad my balloon landed in your backyard," she said, slowly so Peggy could understand. And as Peggy nodded happily, Cherry thought... my balloon did go some place special. It really did!



Things to do *after* reading the story

The little girl who found Cherry's card couldn't hear very well. Talk about people you have met who have a hearing problem. How did you deal with them? Talk about ways that people who don't hear well "speak" with each other.



Tiger Paws and Old Berk

by Jerry Elya

Things to do *before* reading the story

Look around your house for different items or objects, such as furniture, toys, or dishes, and give them names based on the way they look. How did you come up with each name?

One day, a brand new train engine arrived at the railroad yards. He was big and tall, with a growly growl for a voice.

"I've never seen such a big engine!" said one engineer.

"I'll bet he can pull a hundred box cars, all by himself! " said another.

"Look at how big his wheels are!" said a third.

"They're so big they stick out in front and back, just like the paws of a tiger! And he has a tiger's growl too!"

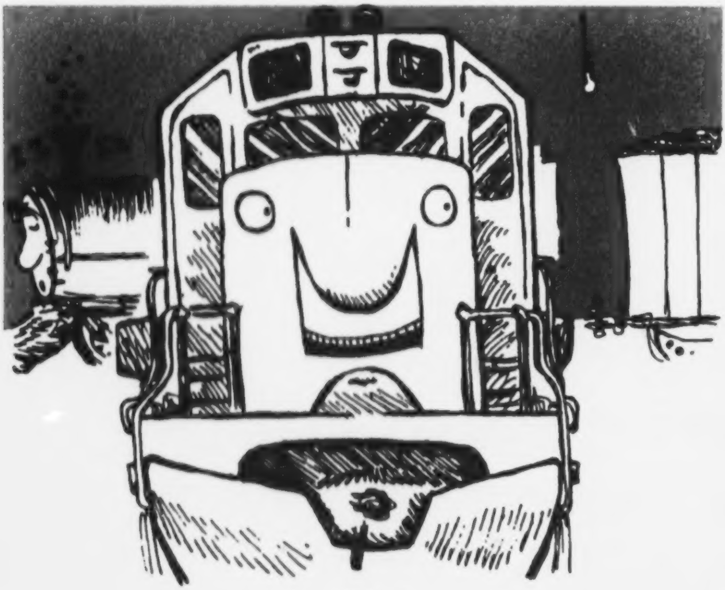
And that's how Tiger Paws got his name.

Tiger Paws loved his job pulling trains. Because he was the biggest engine, he pulled the biggest trains.

Some days Tiger Paws got to pull trains full of shiny new cars from the factory to the car dealers in the city.

Other days he would pull long trains of a hundred coal cars from the mine to the electric power plant.

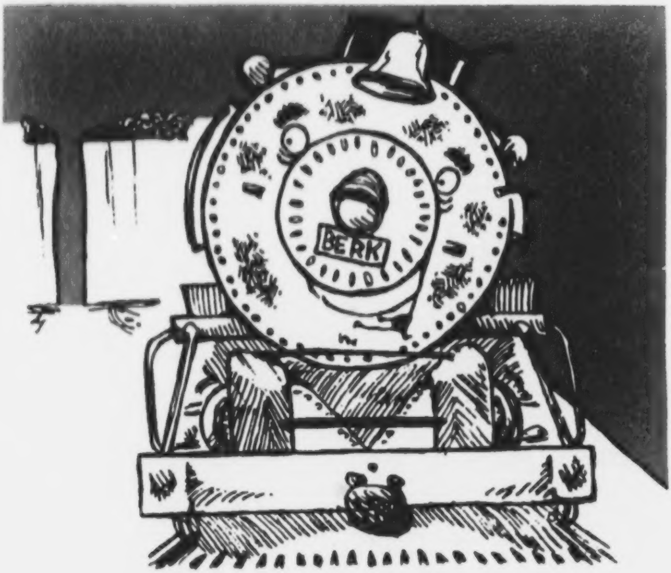
Tiger Paws even got the hardest job of all: pushing heavy trains that were too big and had got stuck in the long, dark tunnels that went under the mountains. His growly growl would shake the insides of the mountain, and the stranded train would be free! He never had to try twice. "Tiger Paws can do anything!" the engineers all said.

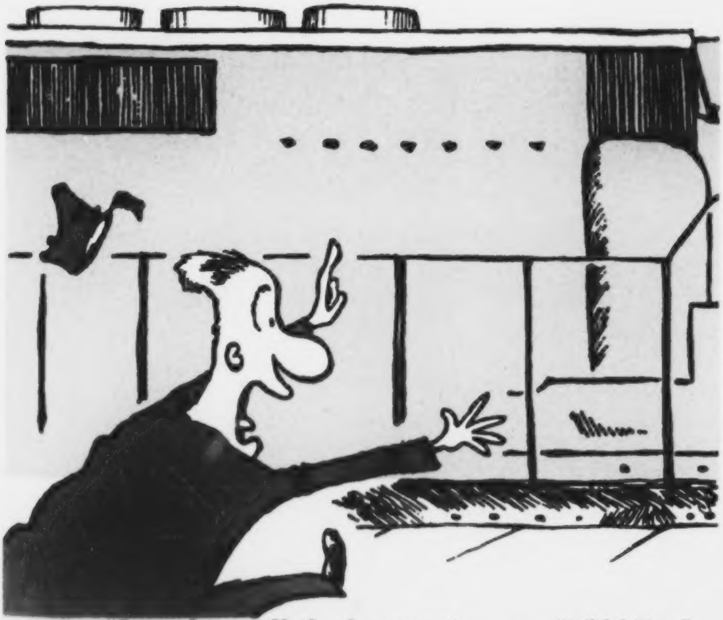


But there was one job that Tiger Paws was never given. He was never asked to pull the fast passenger train, the Twilight Limited. It was always pulled by Speedboy, a shiny silver engine with red, white, and blue stripes who could race the wind.

"Tiger Paws, you're the biggest engine we've got," explained the dispatcher, "but you're much too slow for the Twilight Limited. That's Speedboy's job."

At night, Tiger Paws would stay in the engine house with the other engines. His best friend was Old Berk, an old steam engine that wasn't used anymore. Old Berk just sat in a corner, forgotten by everyone except Tiger Paws, who loved to hear Old Berk tell stories of long ago.

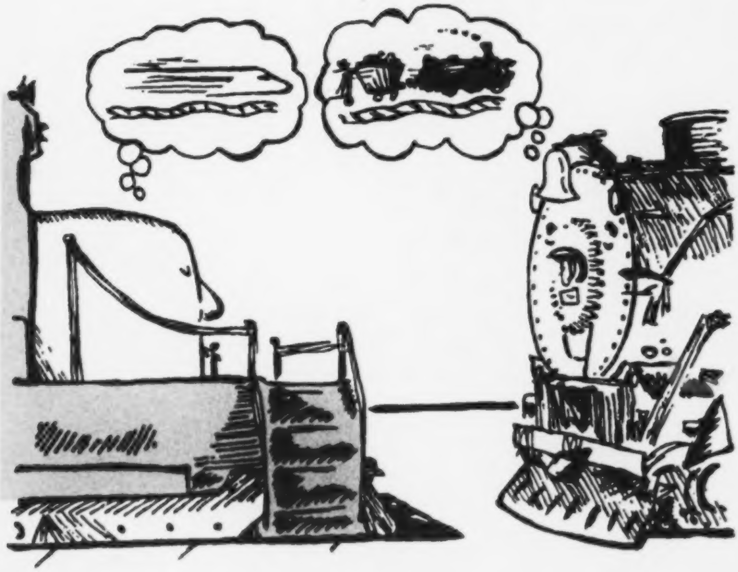




"I used to pull the best trains ever!" Old Berk would say. "I pulled trains full of school children to Summer Camp. I took movie stars from Hollywood to New York. Why, I once got to pull a special train for the President of the United States!"

After an evening of telling each other stories, the two engines would fall asleep, and both would dream their dreams. Tiger Paws dreamed of the Twilight Limited, and Old Berk dreamed of long ago.

One night, the Dispatcher ran into the Engine House, shouting "Get Tiger Paws ready! Speedboy broke down with the Twilight Limited fifty miles away, and three hundred people are stuck on that train!"



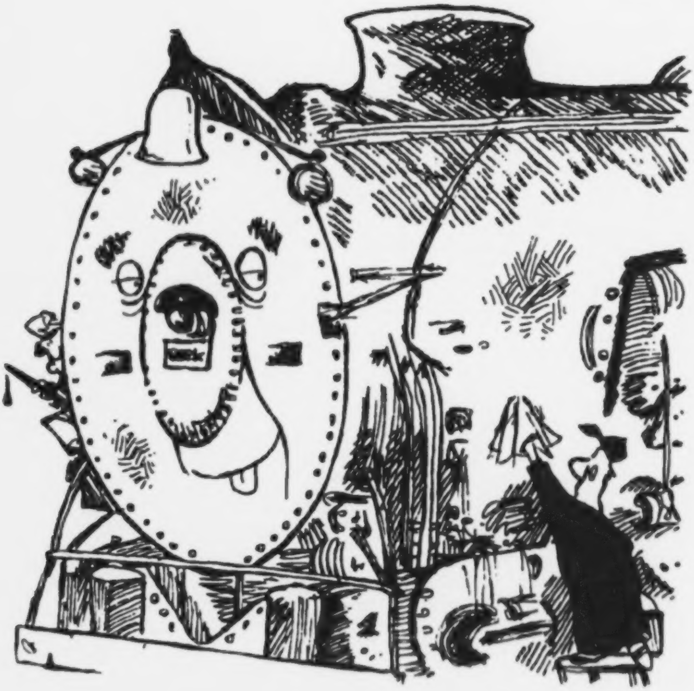
Tiger Paw's heart leaped for joy, but then he remembered his friend Berk. "What will I do?" he muttered. "I'm not fast enough to pull any passenger train. Berk should do this, not me."

Tiger Paws knew what he had to do.

"This engine won't start," called out a mechanic.

"Why won't it?" asked the Dispatcher angrily.

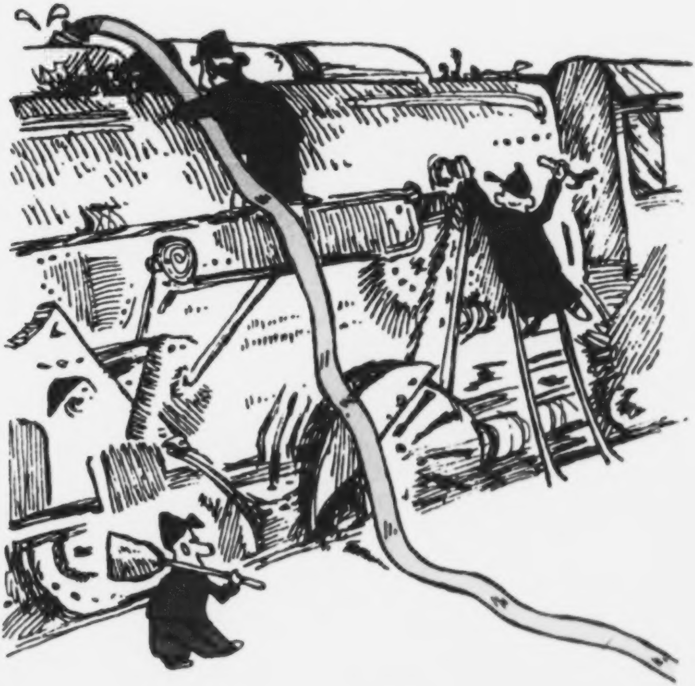
"I don't know. Tiger Paws was tested this morning and worked fine. He has plenty of fuel and a good battery. He just won't start," said another mechanic.



"Why don't we use that old steam engine?" someone asked.

"That piece of junk hasn't moved in thirty years!" shouted the Dispatcher. "Find me an engine that works!"

"I was working here way back when that old engine was put here. It worked fine back then. It should still work now," suggested the oldest mechanic. "We're wasting time and we need to get busy."



Workers raced to get Old Berk ready. Coal was taken from a coal car and put in his huge coal tender. Thousands of gallons of water were poured into his tank. A great fire was started in Berk's boiler, and it soon glowed as bright as the sun. With a clank, squeak, and a squeal, Old Berk started to move!

"Go as fast as you can!" growled Tiger Paws happily. Berk rolled out of the engine house, and with steam and smoke and the sound of his whistle following him, he raced to where the Twilight Limited sat, unable to move.

"Here I am!" Berk called out to Speedboy. "I'll get you and your passengers to Chicago on time, I promise." Berk coupled to the train and began to pull. The Twilight Limited began to move!

Tug! Chug! Tug! Chug!

"Faster!" called out Speedboy.

Ten!

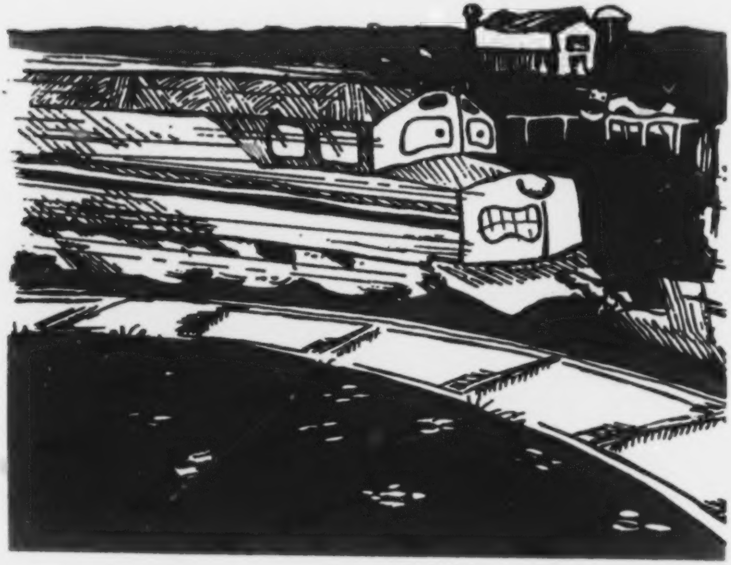
Twenty!

Thirty!

Forty!

Fifty!

Sixty miles an hour! A mile a minute! Speedboy and the rest of the train held on for dear life, and Old Berk was still going faster!



Seventy!

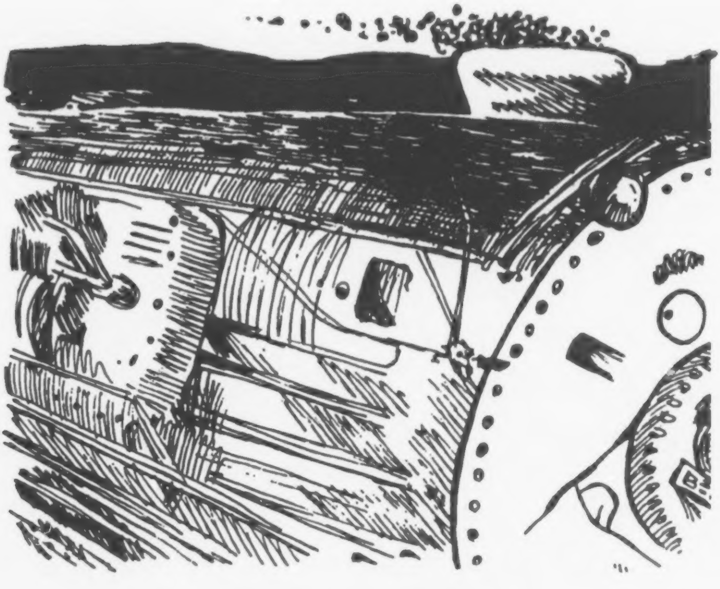
Eighty!

Ninety!

One Hundred!

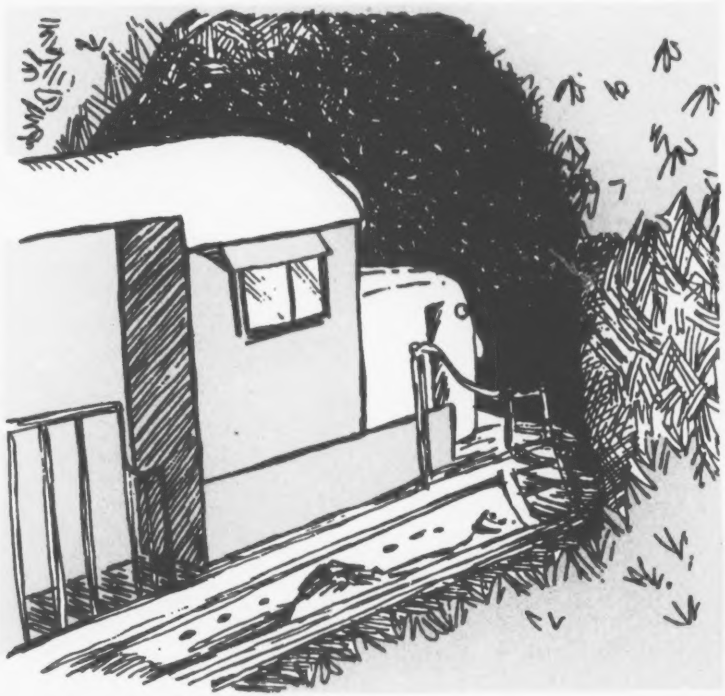
"Berk, you're going faster than I ever have!" called out Speedboy, who was a little bit scared. Berk whistled a laugh in reply and went even faster.

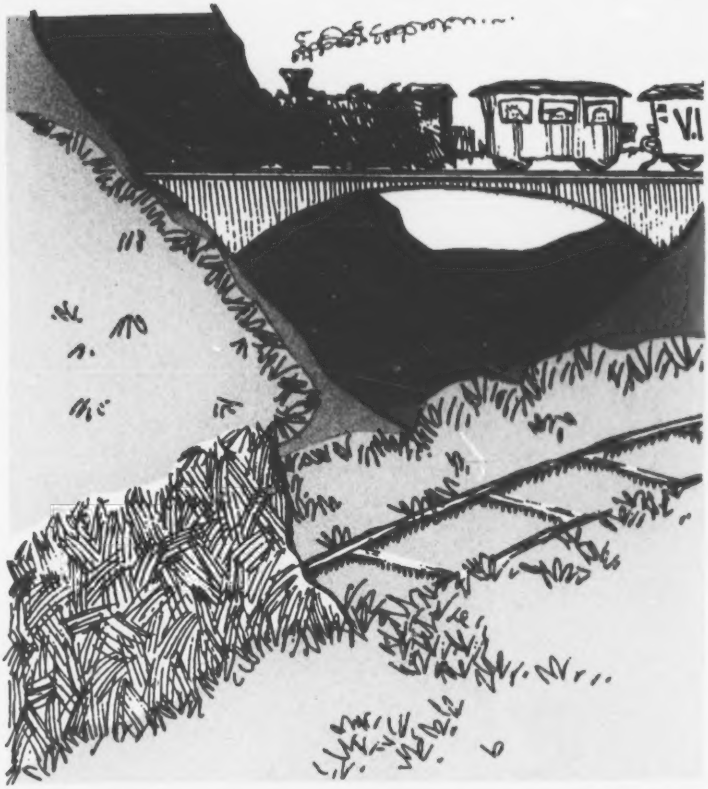
Houses and farms whizzed by in a blur. Porch lights and car headlights flashed. Soon, the big skyscrapers and factories of Chicago appeared. Old Berk slowed down. He took the Twilight Limited underground and into Union Station. He was even early!



Nowadays, Old Berk still sits in the engine house, but during the summer, he gets to pull trains full of children to Summer Camp and make special trips with important people. Speedboy was fixed, good as new, and he pulls the Twilight Limited every night. Tiger Paws still growls his growly growl and pushes huge trains through the mountain tunnels, or pulls his long trains full of shiny new cars.

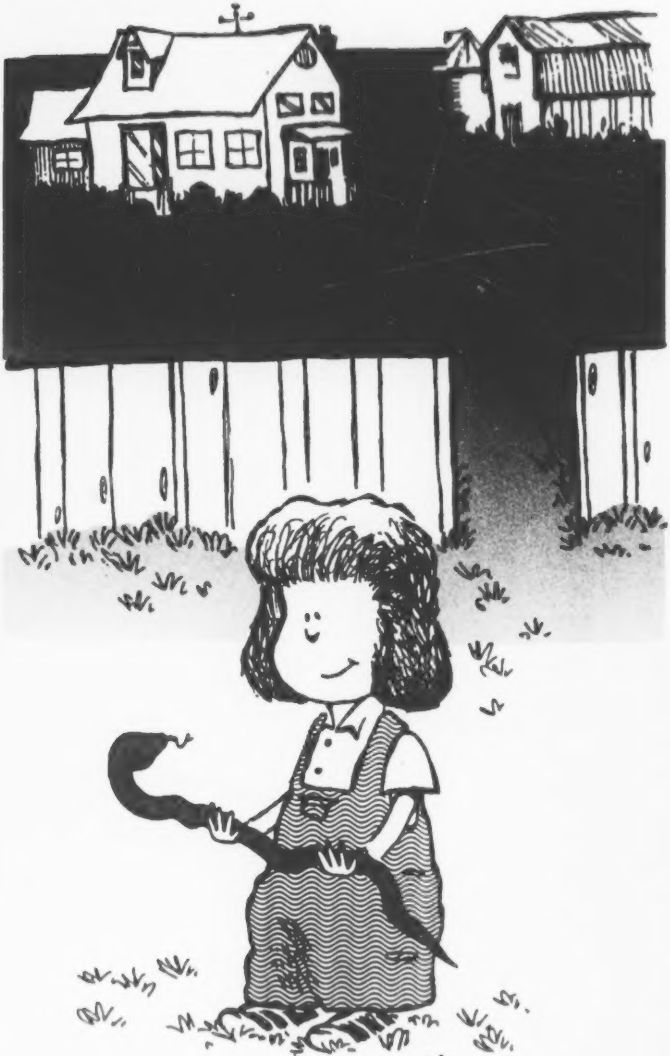
And at night, Tiger Paws sits in the engine house and, every once in awhile, tells his favorite story—how he gave away his dream to help his best friend.





Things to do *after* reading the story

Tiger Paws made himself not work when the engineers wanted to use him for an emergency. He did this because he wanted to make his friend Old Berk feel more useful. Together, talk about ways in which you could make some of your friends feel more useful.



My Sister, The Snake, and I

by Yolanda Ferguson Stein

Things to do *before* reading the story

Some people really don't like snakes. Do you like snakes? Talk about why or why not.

To begin with, my name is Cynthia Ann, and—of course—they call me Cindy. I am eleven years old and have had this sister Emily all my life. She is four years older than I am, but she's real silly. She is afraid of all sorts of interesting things like spiders, white mice, frogs, and snakes—especially snakes. I think they are really great.

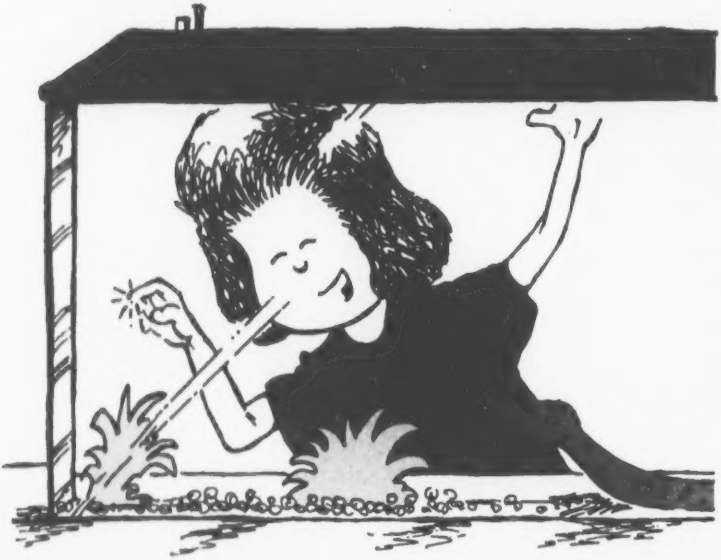
One day last summer, when I was visiting at my aunt and uncle's farm, I found a garter snake. I caught him so I could get a good close-up look at him. He was beautiful: about two feet long with pale stripes and orange dots on his body and little blue slashes on his head. His eyes were red. Not bloodshot, but red. So I named him Red Eye.

My uncle told me I could take him home and keep him for a pet. I said, "No, Emily hates snakes. She's afraid of them."

"Nonsense," said my uncle. "Why would she be afraid of a little garter snake? It won't hurt you, if you handle it properly."

"Oh, Emily wouldn't touch Red Eye, but she'd scream and complain and carry on—" I said. Then I remembered the time she had refused to lend me money for Dad's birthday present, and the time she had reported me for using her hairbrush to brush the dog. "On second thought," I said, "she might learn a lot from Red Eye, once she gets used to him."

So my aunt gave me an empty coffee can, and I poked little holes in the plastic lid (little ones because my uncle told me that snakes are escape artists and can get out of just about anything). Then I took him home.

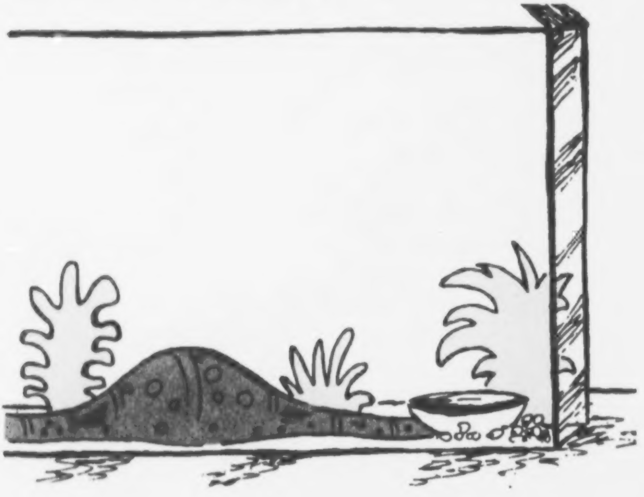


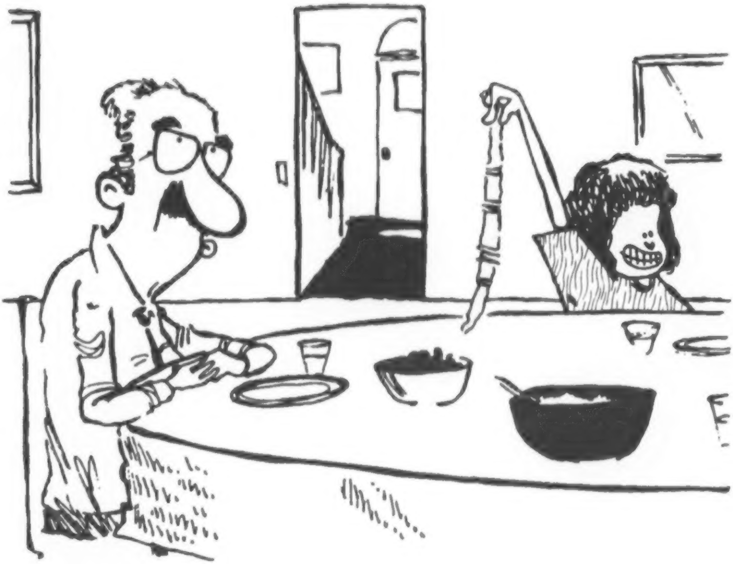
When my mother saw Red Eye, she shook her head. But she helped me find my old fish tank in the garage. It was just the thing for a snake.

Of course, Emily didn't like Red Eye. I knew she wouldn't. She was definitely hostile toward him.

But I came to love him. I know it may sound funny, but whenever I came around his tank, Red Eye would rise up and stick out his long tongue at me, as if to say hello. It's hard to explain. You would have to have a snake for a while to know what I'm talking about.

It was fascinating to watch him eat. When I put a piece of raw fish in his tank, he would open his mouth very wide and swallow it whole. Then for a day or two you could see a large lump in his body that kept getting smaller and smaller as it went farther and farther down.



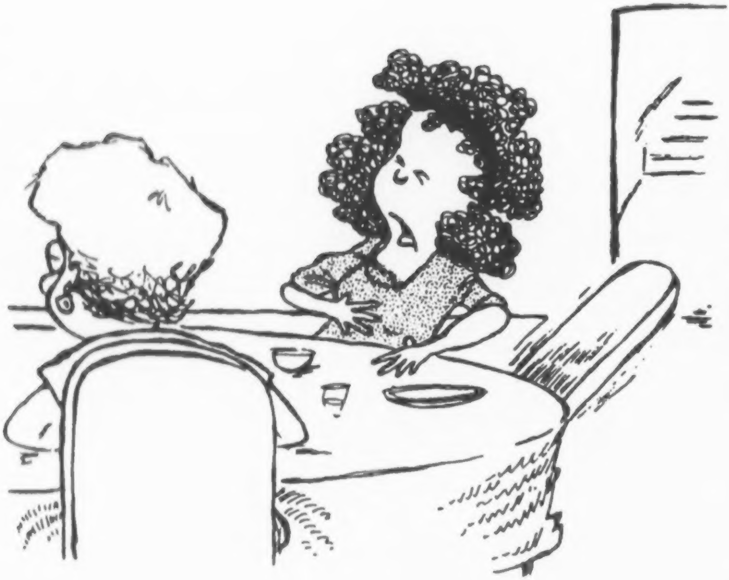


Before I got Red Eye, my sister and I didn't get along too well. After I got Red Eye, it was open warfare.

I was never allowed to tell about Red Eye's eating habits at dinner time. Emily said it made her sick. And once, when I brought the skin he had shed to the table, she got hysterical.

"It's bad enough she has to have a snake for a pet," she screamed, "but do you have to let her bring the slimy skin to the table? I hate snakes! Hate them. Hate them." And she stormed out of the room.

"Snakes are not slimy," I yelled after her. Having read the Pet Library book on "Enjoy Your Snakes," I was fast becoming an authority.



I kept Red Eye in the family room, and everybody enjoyed looking at him—except Emily. She wouldn't go near him; she probably thought he would jump out of the tank and bite her.

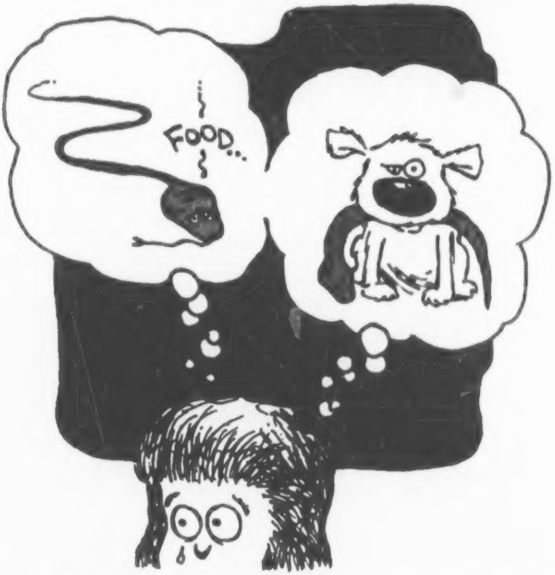
Then one day a terrible thing happened. I went into the family room after school, as usual, to say hello to Red Eye. But he didn't rise up to greet me. Right away I noticed that the top of his tank was slightly ajar. I thought he might have slid down under the gravel at the bottom of the tank, but I stirred it around and saw nothing. Red Eye was gone.

"Mother," I screamed at the top of my voice. "Mother!"

Mother came running into the room. "What is it, for heaven's sake? What's the matter? Are you all right?"

"Somebody left the lid off Red Eye's tank, and he's gone."

"Oh, is that all?" Mother sank down into the nearest chair. "You gave me a terrible scare."



"Is that all? Is that all? At this very moment Red Eye is wandering around somewhere. He could starve to death, or a dog could get him or he could crawl into the heating ducts and die." I started to cry.

"Oh, come now, Cindy. It isn't all that bad. We'll find him; he's probably in this room somewhere."

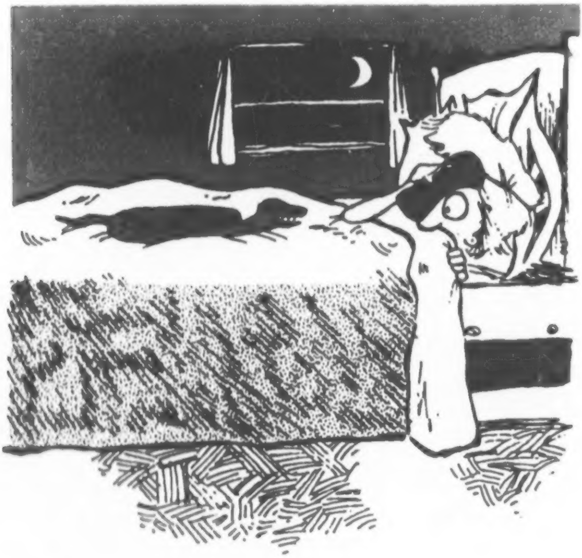
I cried anyway. At that moment Emily came into the room. "What's the matter?" she asked.

"You know what's the matter," I yelled at her. "You finally managed to get rid of Red Eye. I hope you're satisfied. I think you're a very mean person, and I hope Red Eye crawls into your bed tonight and bites you."

"I didn't do anything," Emily said. "I just got home."

I was not going to believe her.

"All right, girls," Mother said, getting up out of her chair. "We'll all look for Red Eye. I do not relish the idea of a snake slithering around this house when we're asleep."



"I'm not looking for any snake," Emily said with feeling.

I cried harder.

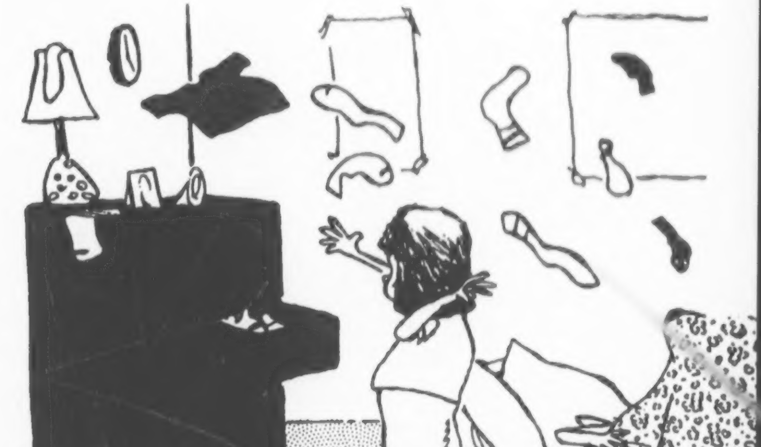
Emily looked at me in surprise. "You really like that snake, don't you?"

"Of course," I sobbed. "What did you think?"

"I thought you were keeping him just to be mean—just because you know I think snakes are hideous."

I started to look for Red Eye. I did not ever want to talk to Emily again.

Emily watched Mother and me for a while, and then she sighed. "Well, if he means that much to you, I guess I'll help."

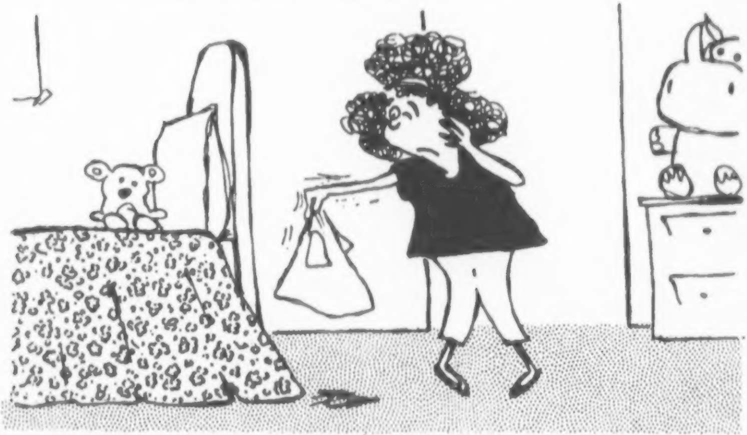


It was a large room with lots of nooks and crannies, and we looked for hours, moving furniture and rugs. I even went through all the drawers in the writing desk. No Red Eye.

Finally Mother said she had to do something about dinner, and Emily and I decided—without saying anything—that it was hopeless. I sat back on my heels and began to cry again. Emily came over and put her arm around my shoulders. “I'm sorry, Cindy. I'm really sorry. We'll look again after dinner. Maybe Dad will be able to find Red Eye when he gets home. You can't give up yet.”

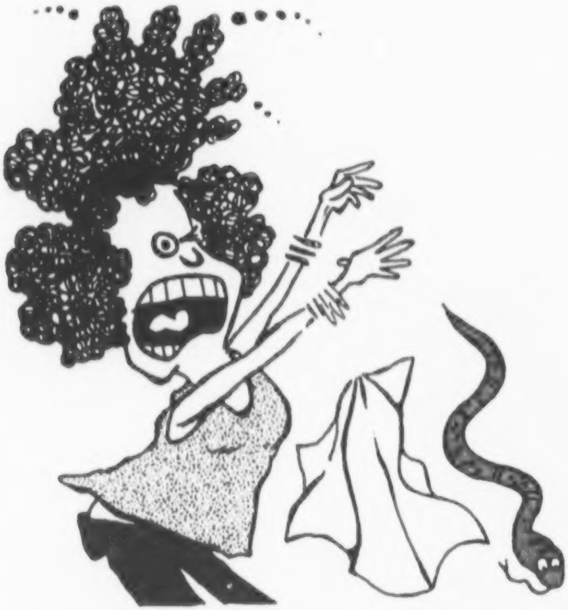
This was the first time in my whole life I can remember Emily touching me, except to hit me, and it made me feel sad to think that she was really not a bad person, and that I had never known it. It made me sad that we couldn't find Red Eye, and it made me even sadder that Dad couldn't help either. He could never find anything, not even his socks in his own drawer.

I sniffled all through dinner.



Mother, Dad, and I were watching television later that night, when suddenly we heard the most terrible screams coming from the bathroom. We all went running in the direction of the noise, and here came Emily, running toward us, holding a bunched-up towel out in front of her. Even when she saw us she didn't stop screaming, but she dropped the towel, and out slid old Red Eye.

It took a while, but we finally got Emily calmed down enough to tell us what had happened. It seemed she had opened the closet door in the bathroom, and there was Red Eye, nestled down among the towels. When he saw her, he started to move, and she knew that if she didn't grab him up in the towel, he would get away.



After I got my snake back into his tank, safe and sound, I said to Emily, "Thanks for getting Red Eye for me."

She shuddered. I knew it had been hard for her to touch him, and I knew she had only done it for me. But I didn't tell her that; I just gave her a hug.

When spring comes around, I'm going to put Red Eye in a coffee can. I am going to put on a plastic lid with small holes punched in it. And I am going to take him back to my aunt and uncle's farm and set him free. He will be safe and happy there, and he will never have to try to escape again.

It's the least I can do for him—and for Emily.

Things to do *after* reading the story

What effect did the snake have on Emily and Cindy's relationship as sisters? How do you think the story would have ended if the snake had not been found? Together, write a different ending where the snake wasn't found.

We hope you have had fun with these stories!

Books of Special Interest to Parents

How Can I Prepare My Young Child for Reading? by Paula C. Grinnell. Presents ideas to assist parents in preparing their children for reading. Focuses on children from birth through kindergarten.

You Can Help Your Young Child with Writing, by Marcia Baghban. Suggests methods parents can use to help develop their children's writing at home. Offers writing and reading activities.

Beginning Literacy and Your Child, by Steven B. Silvern and Linda R. Silvern. Recommends ways parents can participate in the development of their children's literacy. Provides activities for talking, reading, writing, and listening.

Helping Your Child Become a Reader, by Nancy L. Roser. Provides suggestions for parents to help them encourage their children to read. Offers several practical activities for parents.

Creating Readers and Writers, by Susan Mandel Glazer. Suggests parents (1) encourage the use of language, (2) build positive attitudes toward reading, writing, and speaking, and (3) demonstrate the purposes of literacy. Includes book suggestions classified by age groups.

You Can Encourage Your High School Student to Read, by Jamie Myers. Offers practical ideas parents can use to encourage their teenagers to read more. Shows how reading can serve adolescents' needs and presents future needs that reading can fulfill.

Your Child's Vision Is Important, by Caroline Beverstock. Discusses how vision affects school work, how different eye problems affect vision, and how to spot vision problems. Includes suggestions for dealing with vision difficulties.

Encouraging Your Junior High Student to Read, by John L. Shefelbine. Discusses why reading for pleasure is important. Suggests how to find time for reading, gather a variety of reading materials, and help a child who has difficulty reading.

Cost per booklet is $1.75

Produced and distributed in cooperation with the
International Reading Association

101 Ideas to Help Your Child Learn to Read and Write

by Mary and Richard Behm

Offers 101 practical suggestions for parents to help their children develop reading and writing skills in the home environment. Ideas include bedtime activities, using television, travel, games, and many other ways to incorporate literacy into the home.

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Stories for Children and Parents:

1. Make the story fun for children—your primary audience. The adult reading along will enjoy the story if the child does.
2. Make sure that your story is acceptable to parents. We do not want parents to reject the story because it is inappropriate for their children. Writing a story that is interesting to children and at the same time pleasing to parents is a big challenge.
3. Your story should be no longer than eight double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.
4. Correct grammar and syntax are important. For the most part, we choose to model correct standard English.
5. Be careful about the vocabulary you use in your story. Rule out really long and difficult-to-pronounce words. Use "plain" English, when you can—words that have English roots rather than French or Latin ones.
6. Make your stories gender inclusive. Do not use sexist terminology or ideas. Our stories must be interesting to both boys and girls.
7. You may illustrate your own story, but the illustrations must be line drawings in pen and ink only. The drawings must be able to be scanned, so too much detail will not work.

Articles for Parents:

1. Articles should contain practical information and helpful strategies. Anecdotes and other experiences modeling useful learning methods are particularly desirable.
2. Your article should be no longer than four double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.

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"My Sister, the Snake, and I"
Narrator/Cindy: Sonja Rasmussen
Uncle: Steve Gottlieb
Emily: Joy Kahn
Mother: Lauren Gottlieb

Studio: Music House, 1101 N. Hartstrait Rd., Bloomington, IN 47401.

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Celebrating Earth Day Every Day
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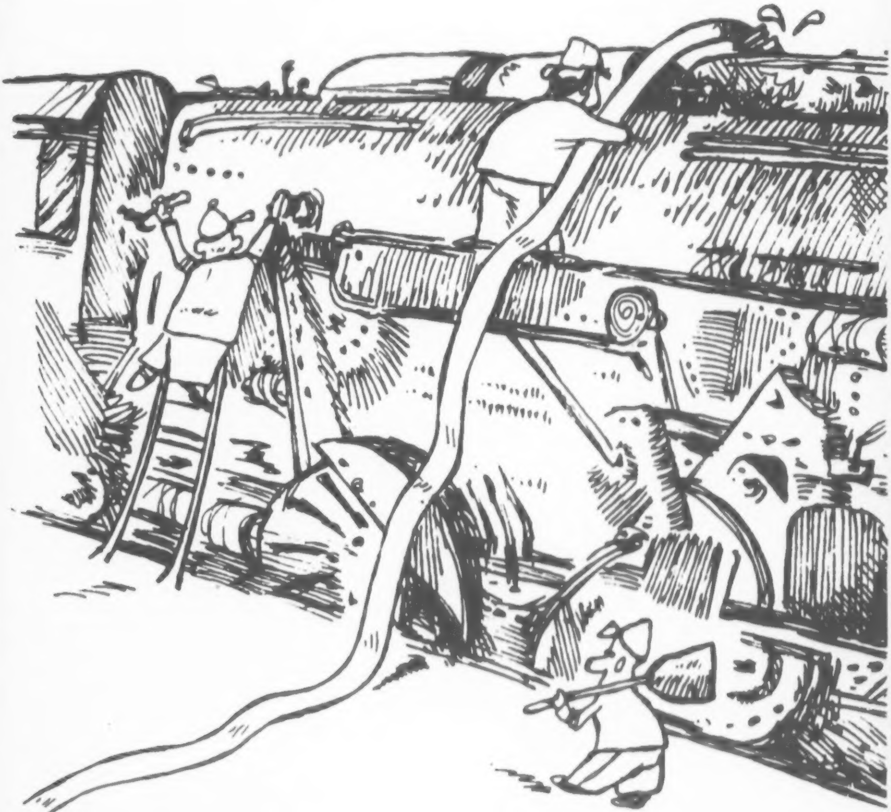
Expressing Yourself through Writing
Speaking and Listening Skills
Improving Your Child's Memory
Collaborative Learning
Developing Your Child's Vocabulary



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Parents and Children Together

Celebrating Earth Day Every Day

Read-along Stories:

Just Because I'm Left-Handed
A Thousand Yards of Sea
The Rabbit and the Lion

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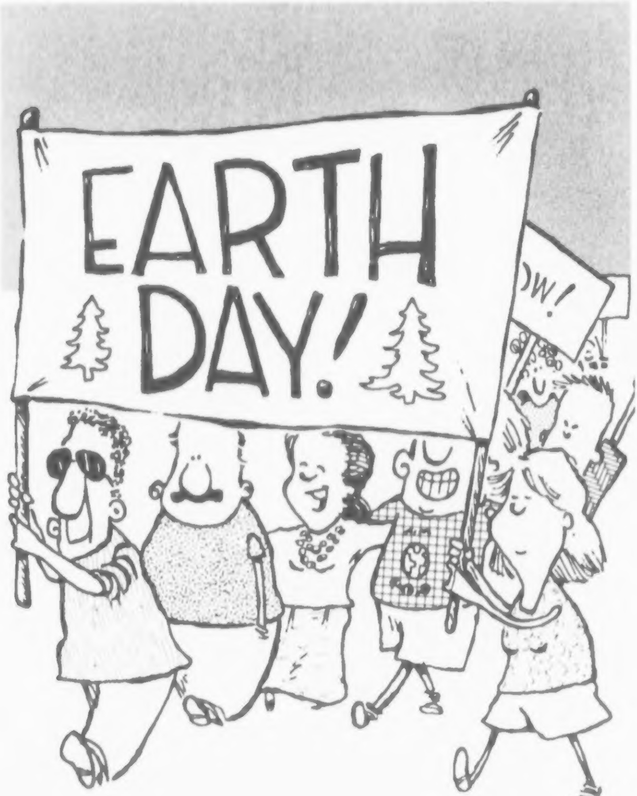
This booklet has a companion audio tape on "Celebrating Earth Day Every Day." Occasionally there are directions on the tape that do not appear in the booklet or headings in the booklet that aren't spoken on the tape.



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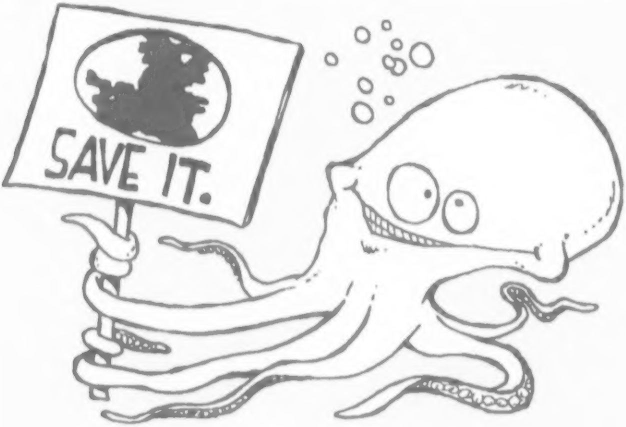
SAVE OUR RAINFORESTS
SOLAR!
Recycle!
PENGUINS OPPOSED TO POLLUTION

Getting Started

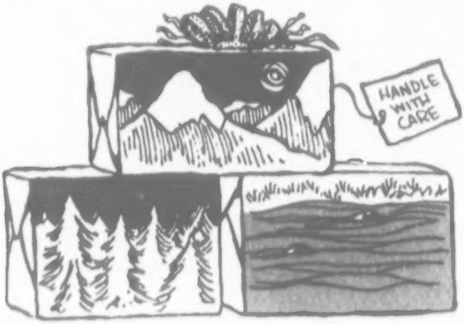
Welcome to this issue of *Parents and Children Together.* We hear about the environment on television, in books and newspapers, and even in children's cartoons. In this issue we focus on how you as a parent can help your children learn about and care for our environment.

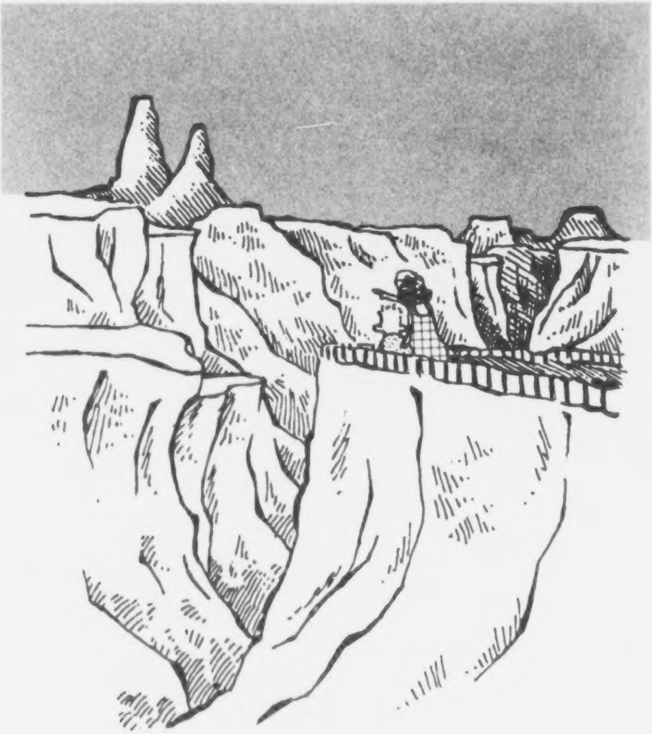
On side B of the tape (and in the second half of the booklet) we have three read-along stories. We encourage you to listen to these stories and to read them with your children, so that they can participate in the excitement of story reading. Of course, your child can also listen to the stories alone, if you wish.



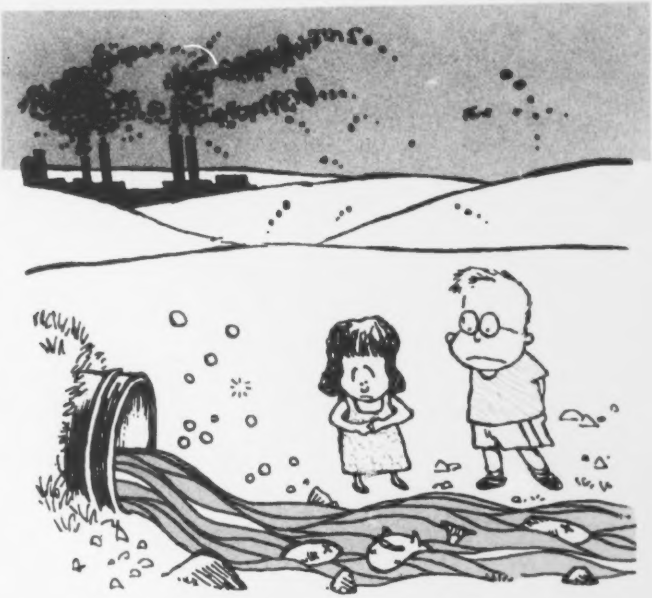
Making the Earth a Better Place for Our Children

When we talk about the environment, we mean the land and air and water around us. The question many parents are asking is: How can we help our children to understand the importance of protecting, and even improving, the Earth? On the one hand, we want them to celebrate the richness of the forests, waterways, and mountains. These are the resources that renew our vision and sustain the air and the rain that refresh us. On the other hand, we want our children to realize that all of these resources are fragile. If they are damaged through our carelessness, they will no longer serve us well in the future. And their beauty and usefulness will not be available for our children and grandchildren.





When we stand on a lake shore, admire the shape of a wooded hillside, or look in awe at a mighty mountain range, it is easy to take a deep breath and say, "Isn't this magnificent!" Then, when we are with our children, we need to follow up that statement with a resolution, such as, "We need to work to keep our earth clean and productive for the future. We don't want it to be damaged so you and your own children can't enjoy it." Making this connection between the beauty of the scenery and the desire to keep it that way, puts the issue of the environment in a positive light.



Unfortunately, many of today's children hear only disaster stories about the environment and believe that their future is already doomed—no clean water to drink or clean air to breathe, perhaps no people alive because of a nuclear holocaust. They hear nothing but tales of dread and destruction, predictions of an absolutely frightful future. Is it any wonder, then, that children's paintings and writings are filled with negative images, and that their sense of the future is filled with frightening thoughts?

We want our children to have a sense of hope and optimism. This optimism can be built on the idea that they can contribute to making their future environment a healthy and beautiful one, so that when they look across the water or the mountains at a rising sun they can feel proud of their contributions and hopeful for the future.

Things to Consider as a Family

The word *ecology* comes from a Greek word that means household. The Earth belongs to all of us who live here. It is our home.

First, we want to maintain the resources of the Earth.

Second, we want to increase our awareness of ecological concerns.

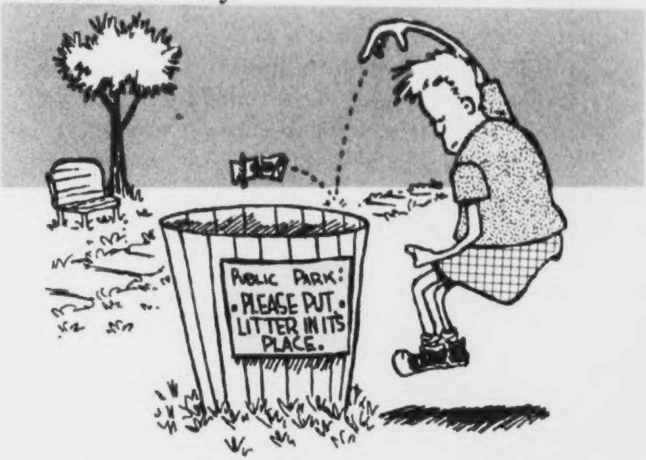
Third, we want to involve our children directly with the natural environment that we are trying to protect.

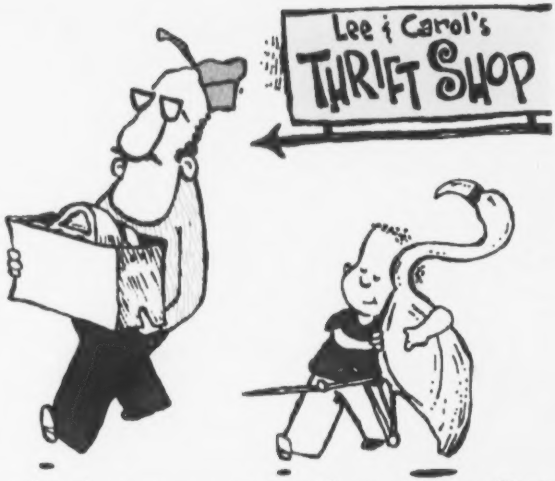
By considering these ideas as family issues, we begin to raise our own awareness, and that of our children, of the Earth as the home of the whole human family. There are also specific steps that we can take to promote awareness and action.

HOME
SWEET
HOME

1. Keep alive the natural curiosity children have about nature. Whether that curiosity focuses on a buzzing fly, a deer in the forest, or the source of rainfall, it represents life outside of us. This curiosity can lead to respect for all forms of life and for all kinds of people. Make it a point to notice and comment on these things when you take a walk with your children, or a drive in the car. The changing colors of leaves in the fall, birds flying overhead, or flowers in a garden are all worth noticing.
2. Develop a sense of sharing resources. Children can understand fairness in using the resources in the environment if we connect that idea with their own home. Each family member shares space, air, and food with others. Perhaps the value of that sharing can be made clear through a series of questions, such as: Why do we turn off the hot water as soon as we are finished washing? Why can't one person eat all the dessert? Why must there be quiet times? How do manners and rules help the family environment?

3. Discuss the community environment with your children. Just as there is a need to share within the home, there is a need to share in the community. Talk with your children about their sense of community and how sharing plays a part. Try to help your children apply these same principles to the neighbors, the local parks, and even the streets around you. Talk about why we don't throw trash from our cars, or leave gum wrappers on the sidewalk. As children learn to understand the broader world, they will begin to apply what they know to faraway places. They will begin to appreciate why protecting the rain forests in South America and in Asia should concern us. If rain forests are destroyed, the climate is changed in that region, and eventually climates in other parts of the world will be affected. That is why we search constantly for ways to improve the quality of the air and water around the world, not just in our own state or country.





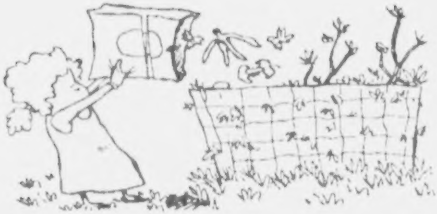
4. Recycle whatever you can at home. Your efforts will be a real contribution to the preservation of the valuable resources of the Earth. Many households recycle newspapers, bottles, plastic jugs, and aluminum cans. Some cities and towns have recycling programs. Talk with your child about recycling in your own home and in your community. Our houses are filled with things that can be used by other people. Instead of throwing a book or magazine into the waste can, why not give it to the school library or to a nursing home? Children's toys and computer games can also have a second life in the same way. Teachers are always looking for games and toys that they can use for their younger students. Thrift shops and other secondhand stores are glad to receive clothes, books, toys, and even furniture. There are many ways to re-use things you no longer need. Let your children help in spotting things in your house that you could give away or sell in a garage sale.

Celebrate Sharing

When we celebrate our Earth, we must celebrate sharing. The vital resources of our life are the air, water, and nature that enrich us daily, and upon which future generations will depend. There is a saying that the Earth is on loan from our children. As we discuss these ideas with our children, we encourage them to feel a sense of ownership and to remain curious. We lay the groundwork for them to act responsibly in protecting and improving the world that is their future home.

Every day can be Earth Day. All we have to do is to keep ourselves alert to possibilities. We don't need to lecture our children about being good citizens. They learn much more from our actions. Here are sample activities that you can do almost any time.

HAPPY EARTH DAY TO YOOOUUU!



Make new soil and watch things grow.

Take your vegetable and fruit scraps and dump them outisde in a box or wire basket. Then, mix them with grass clippings and leaves. We call this composting. Over time, this mixture will become rich soil. Later, you can use the new soil to plant some vegetable or flower seeds.

Recycled giftwrap!

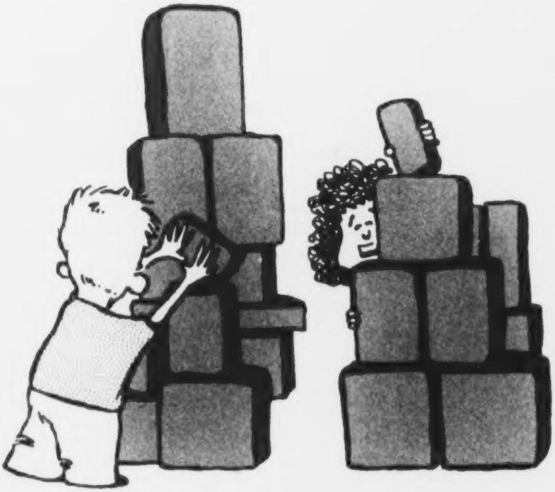
Here's an idea for wrapping gifts in a unique way. Instead of buying wrapping paper, have your children reuse old things in new ways to create special giftwrap. Have them use grocery bags, old tissue paper or giftwrap, and comics sections of the newspaper. Then they can draw pictures on these materials, or use them to make collages. Relatives will really enjoy receiving gifts wrapped in this special paper—sometimes they may treasure the wrapping paper even more than the gift. It's also a great way to build children's self-esteem. Children feel a special pride as they see their creations appreciated by others.

Save gas and energy.

Try using public transportation, car pooling, or walking to get places. Make sure the lights, TV, and radio are turned off when you leave a room. Consider using energy-saver light bulbs.

Buy toys that are sturdy.

Choose toys that will not break easily and that your children will be able to use for a long time. Building toys, such as blocks and Legos, can be used in many different imaginative play activities over a period of years.



Save our rain forests.

There are now many brands of candy and ice cream that are made with rain forest nuts and fruits. If we enjoy eating nuts and fruits from the rain forests, then people will want to save the forests' trees so they can continue to enjoy these treats.

Cut down on garbage and save trees.

Metal forks and knives, reusable plates, and cloth napkins—things that can be used again and again—help maintain the earth's resources and keep the environment cleaner than those made of paper or plastic. Be sure to throw your garbage into waste containers. Buy snack foods, toys, and other products that have recyclable wrappings.

Help the birds in your neighborhood.

Hang an inexpensive bird feeder near a window in your home. You can make one from a milk carton. If you put peanut butter on a pine cone and throw it out in the yard, you will have plenty of birds and squirrels to watch. Borrow a bird book from the library so that you can learn the names of our feathered friends.

Respect our environment.

Insects, rivers, people, grass, animals, and air all depend on each other. One way to promote respect for living things is to notice the life around us. Instead of squashing bugs, look at them. Notice things like how they move and what color they are, and then, if you are in a house, find a way to safely put them outside. Carelessly discarded tabs and plastic rings from soda cans and six-packs can seriously injure a wild animal, so don't be a litterbug!

These suggestions for celebrating Earth Day come from the book, *Earth Day* (by Linda Lowery, Carolrhoda Books). This book explores the history and development of Earth Day. It also presents ideas to help save the environment.

Environmental Education at School

Many school systems now include environmental education programs as a regular part of the school curriculum. The purpose of these programs is to help students become aware of the relationships between what people do and the environment around the world. The burning oil wells that were ignited by Saddam Hussein in Kuwait, for example, are affecting the animal life in and around the Persian Gulf. In the long run, it also affects the air we breathe.

Earth Day was first celebrated in the United States on April 22, 1970. Each year since then, more communities have become involved by planting trees, cleaning up litter, making their surroundings more beautiful, and promoting environmental awareness and action. Congress set up the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to make sure that American cities and American businesses do their share to preserve Mother Earth and to make it a healthier place for all of us to live.

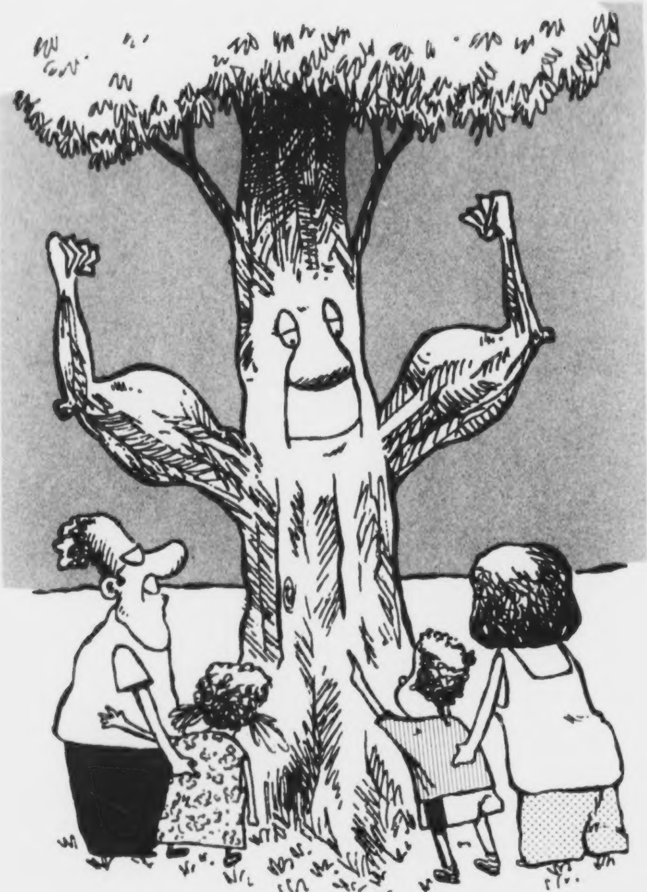
Congress also provided funds for elementary and secondary school environmental education programs through the Environmental Education Act. Using these programs, schools are trying to promote an understanding of how our actions affect Earth, and how the environment affects human health.

Remember to ask your children what they are learning in school about the earth, its landforms, and its air and water. Ask them to tell you about the ways that they can use what they learned at school around the home. They may surprise you with their suggestions.

A Family Tree Project

"Adopting-a-tree" is something the whole family can enjoy while at the same time learning more about the trees in your area. You may even decide you want to purchase a tree for your yard just for this project, or adopt a tree in a nearby park. "Adopting-a-tree" is a valuable way to begin a study of trees. Once your family has decided which tree to adopt, here are some activities you can do with the "family tree":

- Take turns keeping a family nature journal in a notebook. Describe the tree as it is right now, today.
- Look at its physical characteristics (size, leaf shape, bark color, and other features).
- Look to see whether it seems healthy. How can you tell?
- Look to see whether it appears to be asleep (dormant) or awake. How can you tell? What happens to some trees in the winter?



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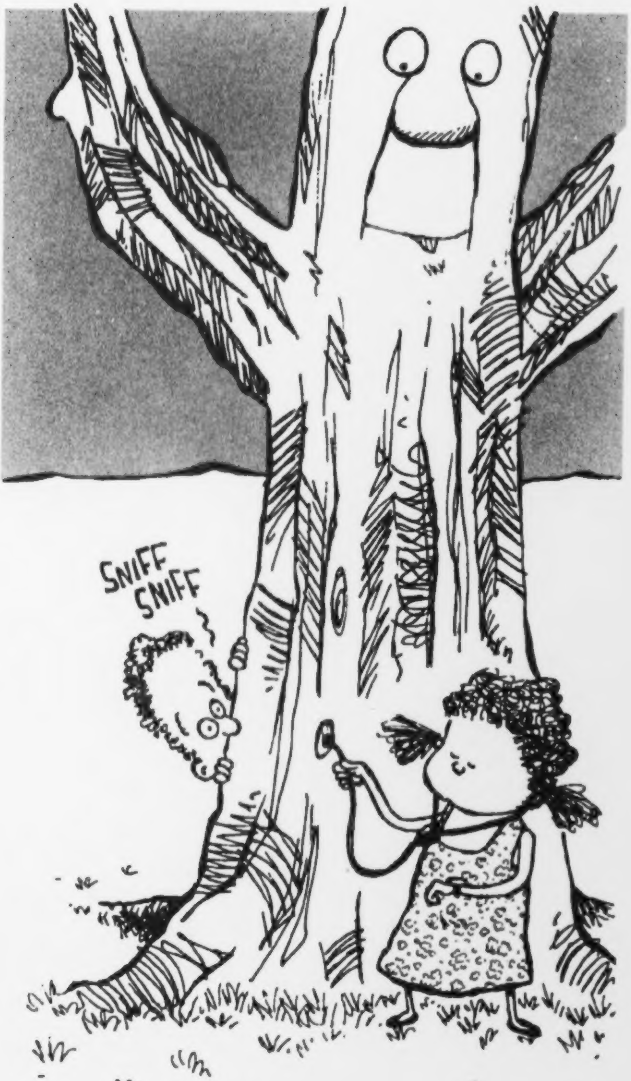
SNIFF
SNIFF

- Listen to find out whether the tree makes any sounds.
- Smell to find out whether it has an odor. Do different parts of the tree, like the bark, old leaves, or new leaves, smell different?
- Think about whether the tree and its parts might smell different to you at other times of the year.
- Think about how the tree got where it is and how new trees might come to join it. Was it planted by people, or did a bird drop the seed?
- Talk about what other living things might need this tree for survival. Do you see any squirrels or birds using "your" tree?
- Think about what things your tree might need for its own survival (such as clean air, water, and minerals from the ground).
- Think about how long the tree might live.
- Visit the tree throughout the year and compare the observations made each time. Continue to record your findings in your journal.
- Look to see how the tree has changed.
- Look to see in what ways the tree has remained the same.
- Think and talk about what the tree might look like the next time you visit it.

Once you have returned from a visit to your tree, talk about what your family has observed. You may want to record your children's statements or comments in the journal.

To answer questions, make use of the reference books in your house or at the local library. Here are some of the ideas you may want your children to know about after you have visited your tree and recorded information in your journal:

- A tree is a living thing.
- A tree has many parts, just as people have many parts in their bodies. There are the trunk (main torso), bark (skin), branches (arms, legs), leaves or needles (hair), and roots (feet).
- Trees have names. Which trees can you and your children identify? (For more information, buy a book on trees or borrow one from the library.)
- A tree has many uses. How many can you think of? (Your family may wish to list some of these in your journal.)
- A tree interacts with, and is dependent upon, many other organisms, such as insects, mammals, and birds.

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MMMM...
PLEASE
PASS THE
MAYO...

Take your adopted tree to lunch. If possible, plan a family picnic under your adopted tree! During lunch, consider these and other questions:

- What is it like under the tree?
- Do any animals visit your tree while you are there? Which ones?
- What kind of help is your tree getting from people, if any (watering, feeding, pruning), and does it need that help?
- Why and when does it need help?
- What kinds of things, if any, are damaging your tree?
- Has your tree dropped seeds? Have any seeds developed into seedlings?
- How does your tree take care of itself?
- How much of its history can you observe? Has it had any accidents (such as being hit by lightning or ice storms)?
- Is your tree crowded by other trees or by buildings?

Have your children think of some words to describe "your" tree. Put any poems, stories, or drawings your children create about your tree in your family journal.

Activities for Fun and Learning

Here are a couple more activities to help children learn while they do their part to keep the earth beautiful and healthy. Select one for you and your child to do together.

Write this Way

Help your child write letters or postcards requesting information about the environment. This will give her a practical reason to write, and later she will be rewarded by receiving mail. Here are some organizations to contact:

Bat Conservation
International
P.O. Box 162603
Austin, TX 78716

Friends of the Earth
Environmental Policy
Institute
Oceanic Society
218 D Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003

Greenpeace USA
1436 U Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009

Kids against Pollution
c/o Tenakill School
275 High Street
Closter, NJ 07624

National Wildlife Federation
1400 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036-2266

Save the Whales
P.O. Box 3650
Washington, DC 20007

United Nations
Environment Program
2 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017

The Wilderness Society
900 Seventeenth St., N.W.
Washington, DC 20006-2596

A Poem to Share

Share the following poem with your child. He might want to make a copy to keep in his room, read at school, or give a friend.

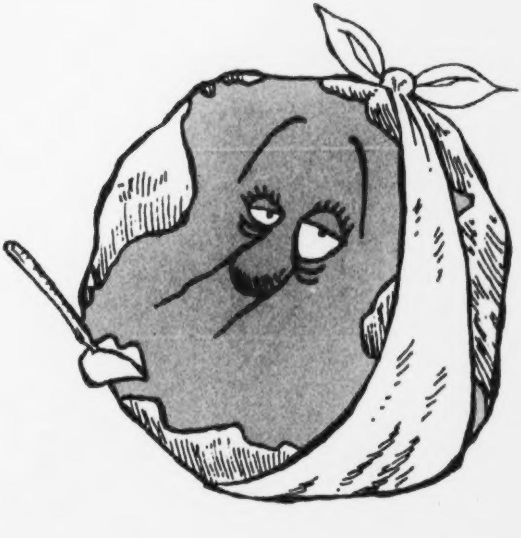
Doctor's Orders, *by Kathleen M. Zakri*

Doctor, Mother Earth needs mending.
Her green color is turning brown.

Hmmmmm...high temperature and shaking—
Digesting too many plastics, I suspect.

Doctor, Mother Earth is qu-a-a-a-king
Will an operation provide the cure?

Prevent further damage is my suggestion
I prescribe rest and daily recycling.



Doctor, the remedy is painless—
Separate plastic from regular trash,
Return aluminum cans and bottles,
Plant trees, flowers, and grass.

Recycling instead of wasting,
May control the disease.
But whether the patient remains healthy
Will depend upon you and me.

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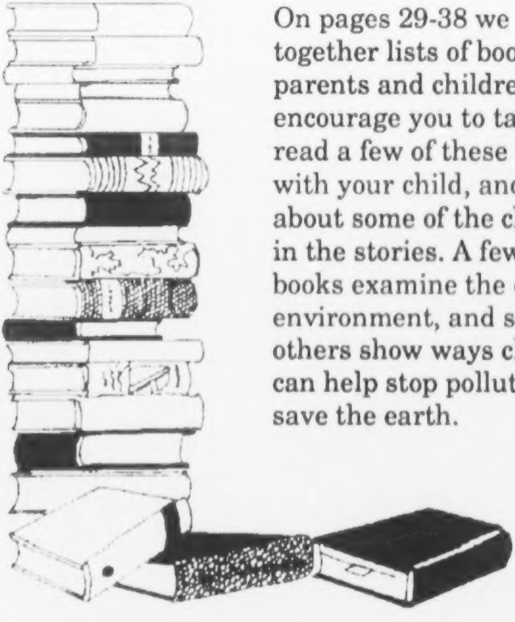
Books for Parents and Children



On pages 29-38 we have put together lists of books for parents and children. We encourage you to take time to read a few of these books with your child, and talk about some of the characters in the stories. A few of the books examine the earth's environment, and some of the others show ways children can help stop pollution and save the earth.

At the beginning of this issue, we mentioned that side B of the audio tape contains three stories that are designed to be read-along stories. You may want to take some time to look ahead at these stories before you read along with your child. It is also important to talk about the story ahead of time.

Before reading the story, talk about the title or things that might happen in the story. Then, after the story is finished, talk about it again. By the way, if in the middle of the story something funny or exciting happens, it's O.K. for you to stop the tape and discuss the event, or for you to ask your child questions such as "Why do they call left-handed people southpaws?" or "Are there ever any mermen or just mermaids?" These questions make your conversation about the story more natural and valuable.

When you and your child are ready, turn the tape to side B and listen to the stories as you read along together, or you may read the stories aloud while your child reads along in the booklet.

* * * * *

Books for Parents

The Complete Guide to Recycling at Home: How to Take Responsibility, Save Money and Protect the Environment, by Gary D. Branson. Covers, in detail, recycling paper, plastic, and yard and garden waste. Also discusses water and energy conservation, hazardous waste, and air quality. Suggests ways to organize for home and business recycling, and to reduce home maintenance. Appendices include lists of resources, organizations, manufacturers and catalogs.

Heloise: Hints for a Healthy Planet, by Heloise. Lists practical tips for families to use at home to improve the environment. Presents ideas for saving energy and water, recycling, decreasing trash output, working in the yard and garden, and improving workplaces. Also lists tips for pets, travel, entertainment, and play.

Beyond the Fray: Reshaping America's Environmental Response, by Daniel D. Chiras. Examines attitudes, actions, and policies America has held concerning the environment and environmental problems in the past. Suggests that for a healthy planet Americans need to change values, institutions, and basic lifestyles.

The Kid's Nature Book: 365 Indoor / Outdoor Activities and Experiences, by Susan Milord (Williamson Publishing). Provides poems, projects, stories, games, and crafts for children of all ages. This easy-to-follow guide presents suggestions for every day of the year beginning in January. Parents can use this book to help their children learn about their environment.

Books to Read Together

Ages 4-6

One World, by Michael Foreman (Arcade Publishing). Two young children playing on a beach are saddened by the pollution they discover. They do their part to help save the environment by cleaning part of the beach. Includes lovely watercolor illustrations.

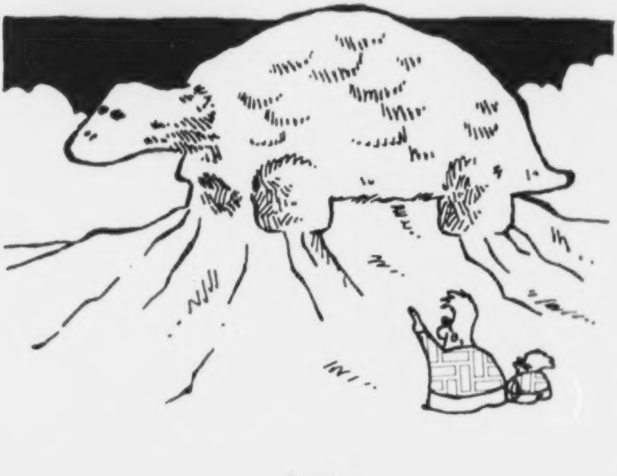
The Berenstain Bears Don't Pollute (Anymore), by Stan and Jan Berenstain (Random House). Follow Brother and Sister as they join Professor Actual Factual in stopping pollution and cleaning up Bear Country. Emphasizes conservation of natural resources.

The Lorax, by Dr. Seuss. The Once-ler chops down Truffula trees to make thneeds. Despite the warnings by the Lorax, he continues to pollute his environment and finally cuts down all the trees. The Lorax leaves old Once-ler with one word "unless." Unless someone cares, nothing is going to get better.

Ages 6-8

The Wump World, by Bill Peet (Houghton Mifflin). Pollutions from the planet Pollutus take over the Wump World and force the Wumps underground. Although there is some hope for the Wumps after the Pollutions leave, their world will never be the same.

And Still the Turtle Watched, by Sheila MacGill-Callhan (Dial Books). A man carved a turtle out of a large rock to watch over the Delaware people many years ago. Erosion, pollution, and vandalism almost destroy this turtle until someone cares enough to restore it.



How Green Are You? by David Bellamy (Clarkson Potter). Kids and their families can use this guide to learn how to save energy, protect wildlife, and reduce pollution. Suggests activities for children and parents to do together to help save their environment.

Ages 8-10

Who Really Killed Cock Robin? An Ecological Mystery, by Jean Craighead George (HarperCollins). Tony, a young environmentalist, must find out what is wrong with the ecology in his hometown. Tony and his friends not only learn the answer to their mystery, but also discover the importance of keeping nature in balance.

AN ASSORTMENT OF LIVING THINGS........ (Series #10021)

KOALA BEAR!
STARFISH!
CHEESE
STUFF THAT GROWS IN YOUR FRIDGE!

Living Treasure: Saving the Earth's Threatened Biodiversity, by Laurence Pringle (Morrow Junior Books). Explores the Earth's variety of life forms and their increasing loss worldwide. Includes suggestions for saving the Earth's vast assortment of life.

Our Endangered Planet is a new series by Lerner Books which focuses on environmental issues confronting our planet. Each book suggests ways in which children can improve the environment.

Our Endangered Planet: Groundwater, by Mary Hoff and Mary M. Rodgers

Our Endangered Planet: Population Growth, by Suzanne Winckler and Mary M. Rodgers

Our Endangered Planet: Rivers and Lakes, by Mary Hoff and Mary M. Rodgers

Our Endangered Planet: Tropical Rain Forests, by Cornelia F. Mutel and Mary M. Rodgers

Books for Your Children to Read by Themselves

Ages 4-6

Window, by Jeannie Baker (Greenwillow Books). Records the growth of a young boy and the changes that occur in his surroundings as seen from his window. What begins as wilderness becomes a village and then a city. Illustrated by collage constructions. (A wordless book.)

Rain, by Robert Kalan (Mulberry Books). Describes a rain storm using brief text and bold graphics. Looks at the environment before, during, and after the rain.

WATCH THE SKY, SON... WHEN THE ANIMALS ACT THIS WAY, THERE'S SURE TO BE A STORM A'BREWIN'!
MOOOOOO
OINK OINK
SQUAWK

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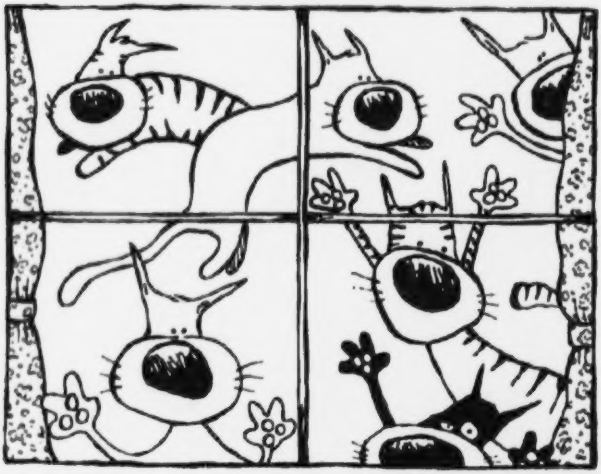
Uminum
Glass
Plastic

Let's Talk Trash: The Kids' Book about Recycling, by Kelly McQueen and David Fassler (Waterfront Books). Uses children's thoughts, questions, and drawings to explain trash and trash disposal. Provides space for children reading the book to draw and write.

Ages 6-8

My Grandpa and the Sea, by Katherine Orr (Carolrhoda). Grandpa lives on the island of St. Lucia. He teaches Lila that for everything people take from nature, something should be given in return.

The Old Ladies Who Liked Cats, by Carol Greene (HarperCollins). An entire community is in danger because of a new law which orders citizens to keep their cats inside at night. The wise old ladies understand about how things work together and suggest that the cats be free at night, which eventually makes the island safe again.



The following books are part of a series by Childrens Press. They provide information on several environmental concerns and contain numerous color photographs.

Air Pollution
Water Pollution
Soil Erosion and Pollution
The Greenhouse Effect, by Darlene R. Stille

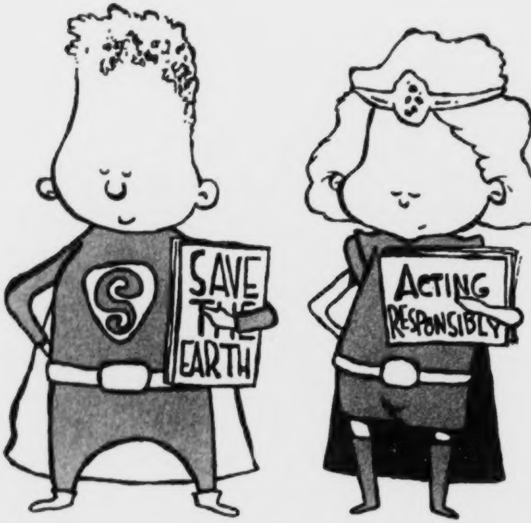
Conservation, by Richard Gates

Global Change, by Theodore P. Snow

Ages 8-10

Will We Miss Them? Endangered Species, by Alexandra Wright (Charlesbridge). Looks at endangered species from the viewpoint of the eleven-year-old author. Features the following species: bald eagle, African elephant, blue whale, panda, Galapagos tortoise, mountain lion, whooping crane, grizzly bear, manatee, crocodile, mountain gorilla, rhinoceros, and muriqui.

Save the Earth: An Action Handbook for Kids, by Betty Miles (Alfred A. Knopf). Provides information about land, water, atmosphere, energy, plants, animals, and people, and the effects each one has on the entire environment. Gives several projects that children can do to help save the earth.

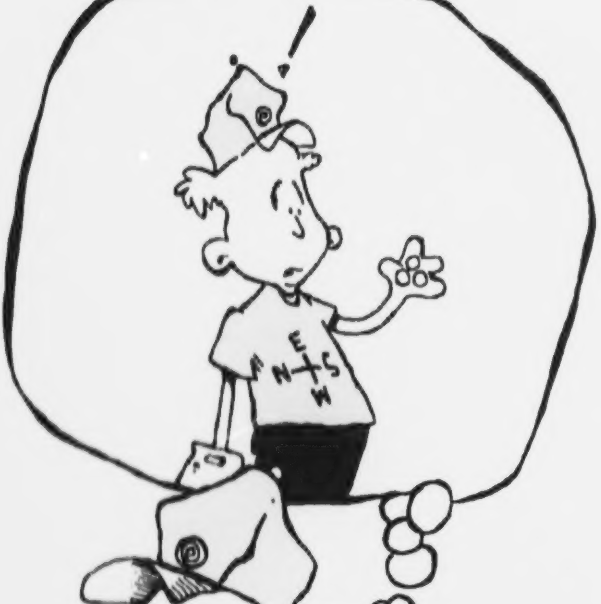


Brother Eagle, Sister Sky: The Words of Chief Seattle (Dial Books). Records the words of one of the most respected chiefs of the Northwest Nations. He expressed the belief of Native Americans who feel "that this earth and every creature on it is sacred." Splendid illustrations bring the message to life.

Magazines

Chickadee Magazine
Cricket
Dolphin Log
Highlights for Children
Kind News
Koala Club News
National Geographic World
National Wildlife
Owl Magazine
Ranger Rick
Skipping Stones: A Multi-Ethnic Children's Forum
Your Big Backyard
Zoobooks

Read-along Stories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W

Just Because I'm Left-Handed

by Linda McCollum Brown

Things to do *before* reading the story

Think about the title of this story and together talk about what may happen. Will the story have a happy or sad ending? Why or why not?

This whole mess started just because I'm left-handed.

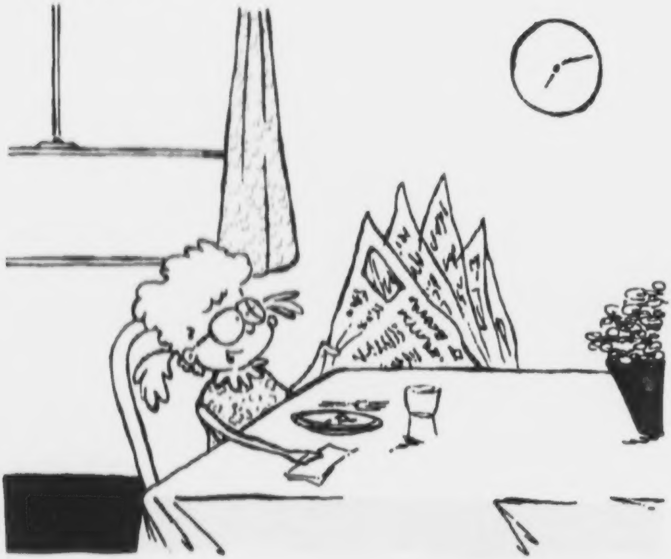
Last month Tim and Jeff talked me into signing up for Little League. Now baseball is OK and all, but it isn't my favorite thing to do. Just give me my clarinet or a chemistry set or a tennis racket or a book to read—especially a mystery—and I'm happy. But Tim and Jeff are my best friends, and they said that a lefty really can do a right-handed pitcher in and that I could help their team out a whole lot.

So, I figured, why not? The Panthers' coach, Mr. Goodwin, said, "Hey, great—a southpaw!" I can't stand it when people call me a southpaw (I mean, does that make them northpaws?), but other than that he is OK. He is a really strong ballplayer, a super athlete.

Mom said I could ride the bus to practice so I wouldn't have to bother Mrs. Neumerski, our after-school baby-sitter, for a ride. I never miss dinner because we eat late anyhow, since Mom gets home from work late.

Everything was going fine until my sister Kathie (she's only in the third grade) saw that article in the newspaper. I wish she didn't like to read so much! But what's worse is that she has to tell everyone about what she reads.

I was all set to dive into my cherry pie after supper one night when she said, "Hey, Mom, I just read a really good article in the *Times.* It's about how some football and baseball players take ballet lessons."

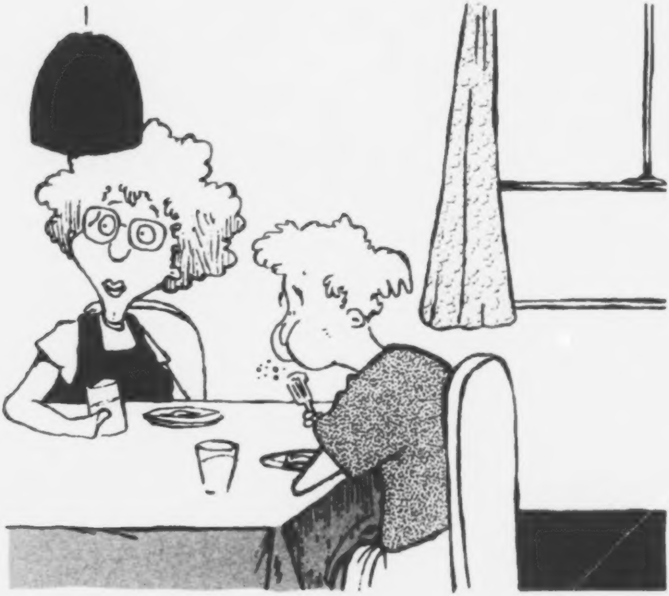


"Ballet lessons?" Mom asked, looking up.

"Ballet lessons!" I almost choked on a mouthful of cherries.

"Yes, ballet lessons," Kathie answered, "during the off-season to help them keep in shape. Some of them even do it during the playing season because it helps them be more graceful."

"Oh, next I suppose you'll say that I should take ballet lessons," I said, laughing really hard. "What a joke."



"Well," she said, looking at Mom and ignoring me, "our whole dancing school is going to do the *Nutcracker* for Christmas next year. The only trouble is there aren't enough boys, and I told Mrs. Goodwin that when baseball season ends, Mike would like to stay in shape and that he would come and . . ."

"You what?" This time I really did choke. "Me, dancing? No way!"

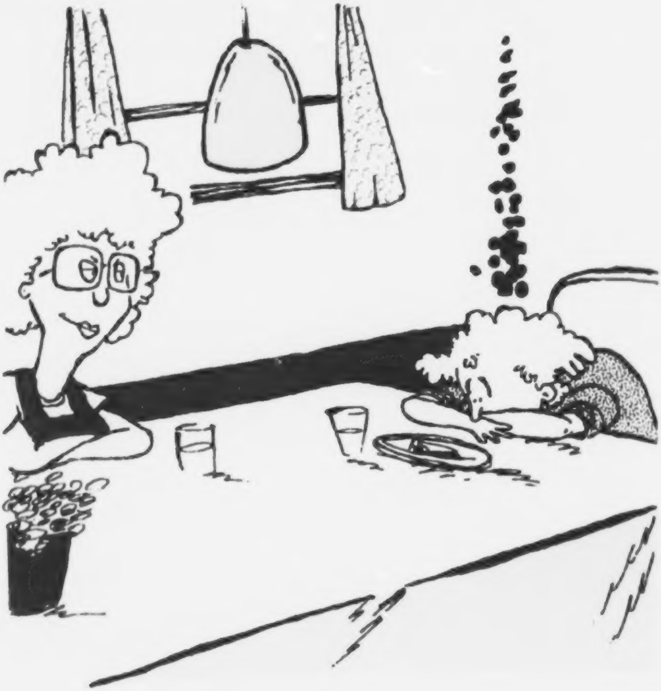
Mom glared at me. She turned to Kathie. "You know, dear, you mustn't promise something like that unless you ask Mike about it first."

Then she turned to me, and I could tell by the look in her eye that I was doomed. "However, Mike, it might be a good idea. You love music, and you complain that you don't get enough exercise during the winter."

"It's not winter now," I sputtered.

"No, but they really do need some tall boys practicing now to be ready to dance the *Nutcracker* at Christmas. I was talking to Mrs. Goodwin the other day. Why don't you give it a try? If you still don't like it after a month or so, then you can drop it," Mom said. I could tell by her tone of voice there was no use trying to talk her out of it.

So now, there I was. The next day was my first—ugh—ballet lesson. If Jeff or Tim or any of the other guys had found out about it, I think I would have just died.



"Hey, Mom, can you call Jeff and tell him I'm sick or something? I was supposed to go over to his house tomorrow after practice, but now I've got that dumb dancing lesson."

"That won't be necessary, dear," Mom had said, giving me her you-know-we-don't-do-that-kind-of-thing look. "Jeff just called to say his uncle will be visiting him tomorrow, so it wouldn't work out anyway."

The next day Jeff was sure quiet at practice. He didn't even talk about his uncle coming, so I figured maybe he didn't like him or something. After practice Coach Goodwin said to me, "Can I give you a lift to the dancing school?"

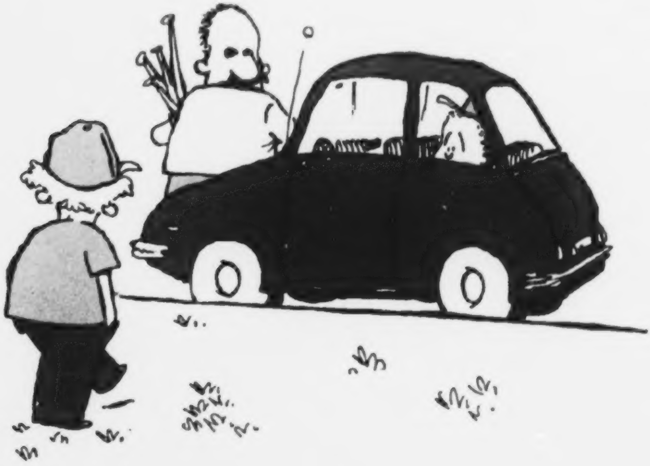
"Sh-h-h!" I hissed, looking around quickly to make sure no one had heard him. "You mean you're going over there?"

"Sure," he said. "I teach the boys' class."

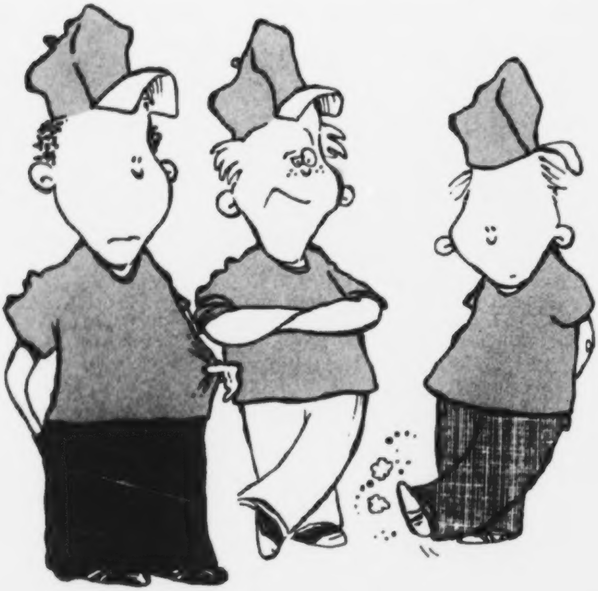
"You do?" I couldn't believe what I was hearing.

"Right," he answered. "I used to dance with a ballet company full-time until I injured my knee. You know, you've got to be in excellent physical shape to be a good dancer, just like any other kind of athlete."

He might have told me more, but just then we reached his car. And what do you know—Jeff was sitting in the car, looking as miserable as I had felt earlier. Tim and some of the other guys were twirling around on their toes in the dust beside the car. "Jeff's going to dance like this," Tim hooted as he spun around. The rest of the guys were laughing.



Right then I wanted to run the other way, hop on my bike, and pedal home—fast. But Jeff sure looked all alone. And besides, if I had to go to dancing class, it would be a lot more fun to have one of my friends there too. So I called out loud, "Hey, Jeff, did you know you have to be in great shape to be a good dancer? Some of the best ballplayers take ballet lessons to stay in shape for the season." Tim and the other guys just stood there in the dust. I guess they didn't know what to say about that.



Jeff grinned and looked a little better. I never thought that anything Kathie said would make me or my friends feel better, but I'm glad I remembered her *Times* article.

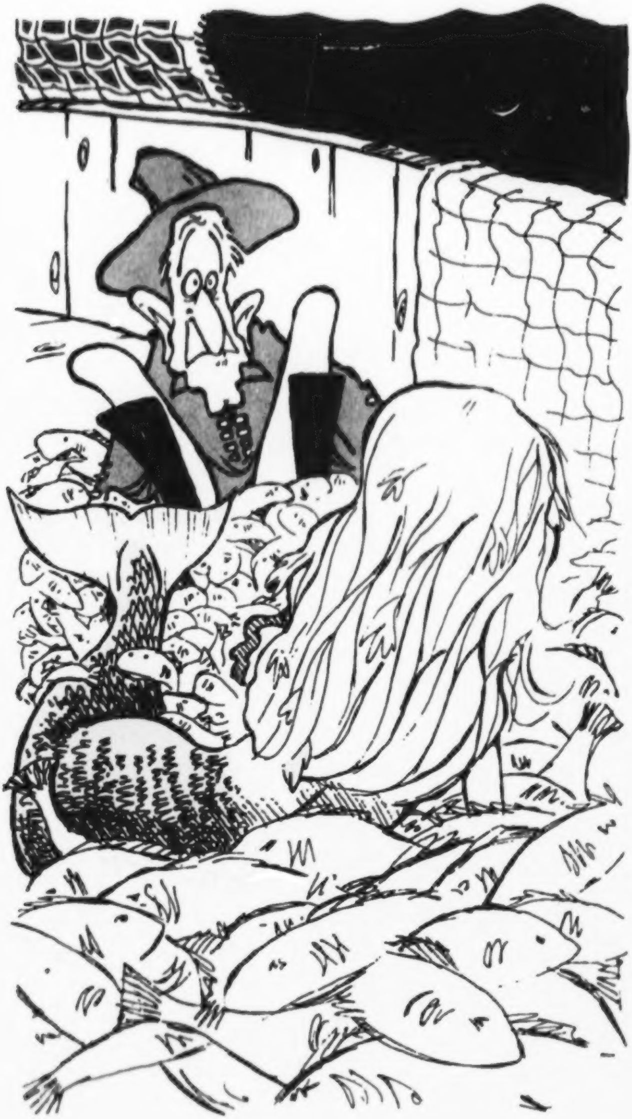
Then I remembered something else. "Hey, Jeff, what about your uncle?"

He rolled his eyes. "Aw, I just made that up. I couldn't tell you where I was really going."

This may not be so bad after all. I guess we can give it a try.

Things to do *after* reading the story

Tim and Jeff thought ballet dancing was for girls before they found out how good it was for baseball players. Think of an activity that boys normally do, and tell how it would be good for girls.



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A Thousand Yards of Sea

by Adele Geras

Things to do *before* reading the story

Suppose you went fishing and you caught a mermaid instead of a fish. Would you tell anyone about it? Why or why not? Do you believe in mermaids? Why or why not?

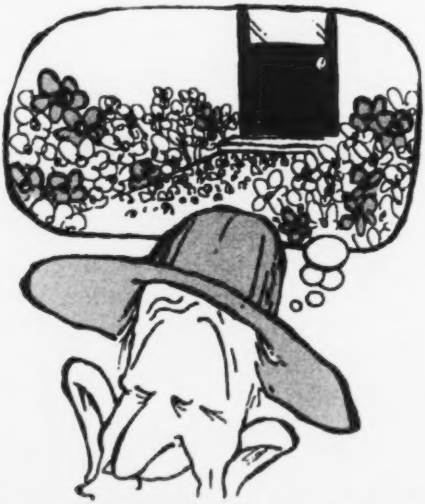
The fishing boat was rocking slowly in blue waters—to and fro, to and fro. Tom Taffet the fisherman looked at the heap of fish shining in the sun and thought, what a lot I've caught today! I shall haul in just one more catch and then make for the harbor. He leaned over the edge of the little boat and drew in his net. As he poured the fish onto the deck, sparks of water slid from their pink-silvery, blue-silvery, brown-speckled backs.

There's a beauty, thought Tom. I've never seen a fish that color before. He picked it up by the tail to have a closer look, and was so surprised that he sat down at once, right in the middle of his catch. He was holding the tail of a mermaid! Her hair was brown and hung with seaweed, her tail was mauve and blue and silver and green, and her eyes were the color of stormy water.

"Cod streaks and shrimp tails!" he said. "I thought mermaids lived only in stories and sea chanteys. Am I dreaming?"

"Certainly not," said the mermaid. "I don't know who you are, but I'd be very grateful if you'd just put me back into the water. I was on my way home, you know."

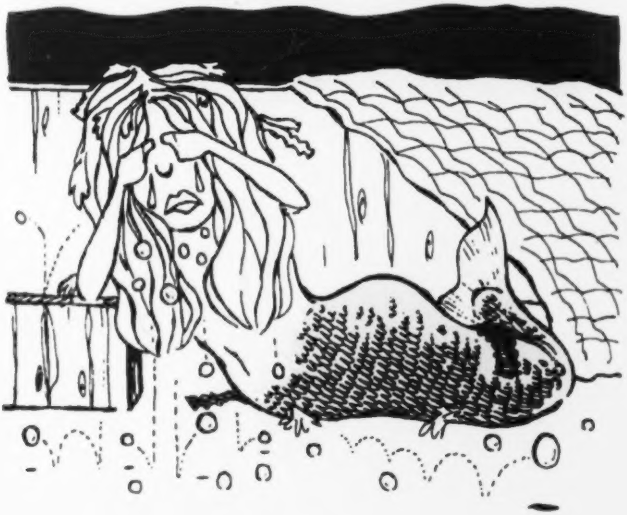
"But I can't put you back," said Tom. "I could be rich if you would help me. We'd both be famous. I'd be able to buy a little house with a garden, I could grow flowers, and I'd never have to go fishing in the cold and the wind again."



"That sounds lovely for you," said the mermaid, "but I should hate it. I'd have to live in a glass box full of water, and people would stare at me through the walls. I'd never see my family again."

"I would look after you as if you were my own daughter," said Tom. "You could live with me and my wife. We'd put your tank in the front room, and I'd bring you wonderful toys and good things to eat."

"Would you like your daughter to live at the bottom of the sea?" asked the mermaid. "However many good things she had down there, wouldn't you miss her?" She began to cry. Tears like small pearls rolled down her cheeks and plopped onto the fish piled up on the deck.

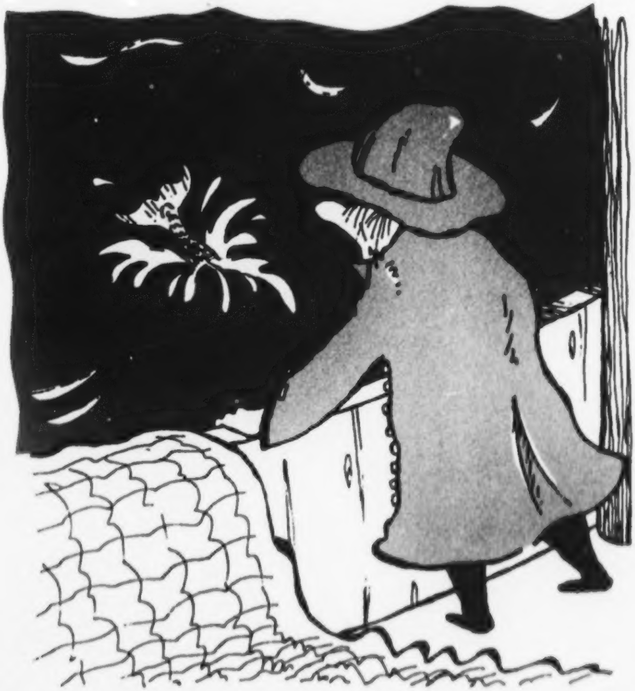


The fisherman thought for a long time. His daughter was grown-up, with children of her own, but he could still remember how she used to cry when she was small. He would have hated to have her live at the bottom of the sea. He would have missed her very much.

"Oh, well," he sighed. "I suppose you're right. You are too young to leave home. It's a shame, that's what it is. No one will believe that I've seen you. They'll say I was dreaming."

"I'll give you something in return for setting me free," said the mermaid, smiling now. "And maybe they'll believe you, after all. May I borrow your knife?"

"It's very sharp; please be careful," said Tom. He picked up the mermaid and slipped her gently into the water. Then he put his knife into her hand. With a flash of her tail, she was gone.



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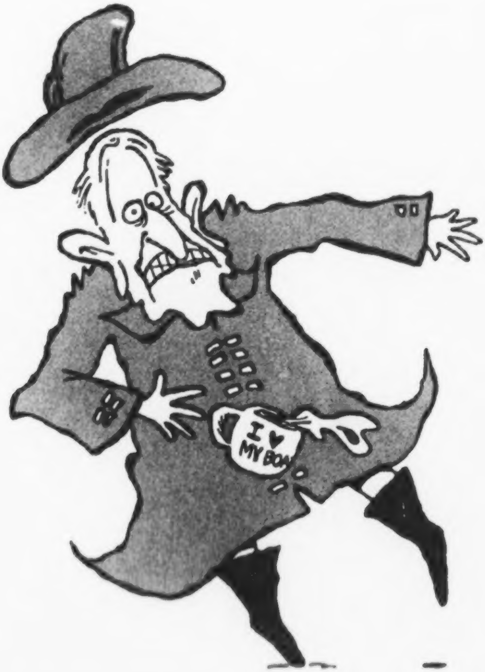
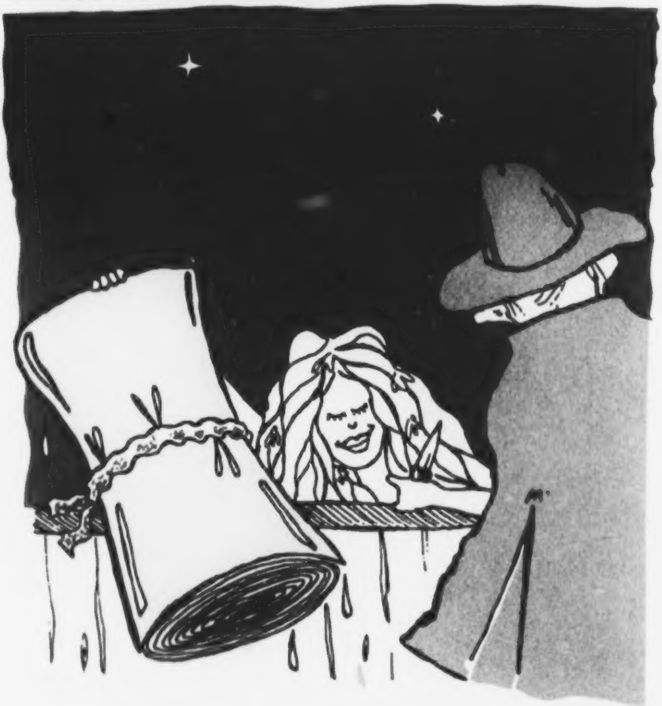
That's that, then, Tom said to himself. No mermaid and no knife. What a fool I am! Maybe I was dreaming, but my knife is gone, and that's a pity. I shall have to buy a new one in the market tomorrow. He turned the little boat toward the harbor. It was nighttime now, and Tom could see the reflection of the stars dancing in the black water.



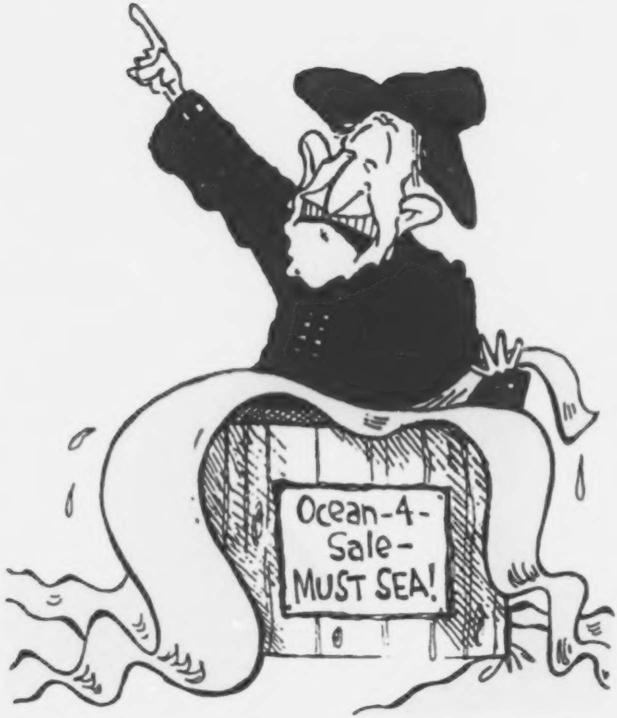
"Suddenly he heard a voice say, "Please don't go so quickly! I'm carrying something very heavy." It was the mermaid. Tom was so surprised that he spilled a mug of cocoa all over his boots.

"Fish cakes and fillets!" he said. "I never thought to see you again. What's that you're holding?"

"It's a thousand yards of sea. I've rolled it up and tied it neatly. I'm sure that shore people would like to buy some. And here's your knife, too." She pushed the bundle of sea into the boat and handed the knife to Tom.



"Thank you very much, little mermaid," said the fisherman. He could not imagine what people were going to do with a length of sea, but the mermaid was gone, so he could not ask her.

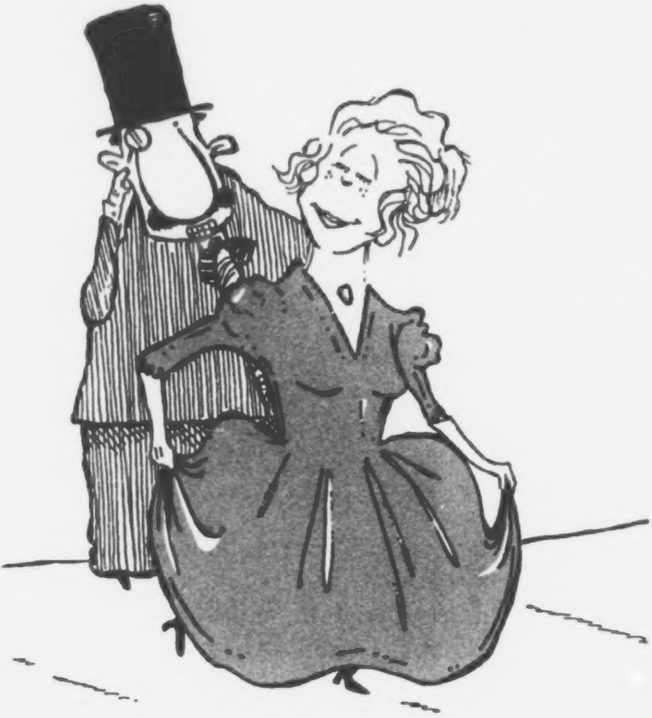


The next day, Tom went to market to try and sell a few yards of sea. He set the bundle on a big wooden box and cut the ropes of seaweed that the mermaid had tied so carefully.

Wave upon wave of blue and green and silver fell around his feet. The colors shone and shifted and merged into one another. "Come and buy! Come and buy! Genuine yards of sea cut by a mermaid—yes, a mermaid—just for me," he shouted. "Guaranteed to bring luck! Lovely colors! Come and see the lovely colors!"

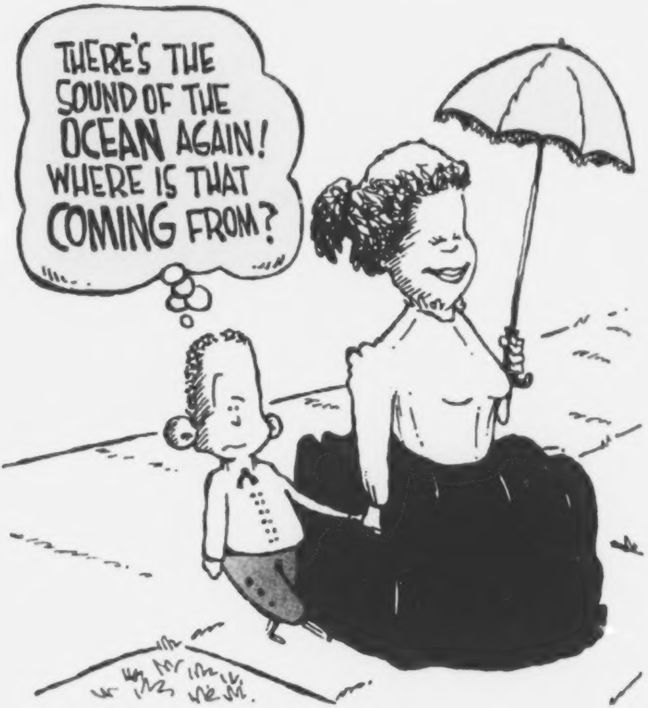
People gathered 'round Tom's box, and the women began to buy the silky, whispery stuff. At the end of the day, Tom Taffet had made enough money to buy a little house with a garden to grow flowers in.

The women made the yards of sea into dresses and petticoats that sounded like rushing water when they moved. And they called it taffeta, after the fisherman who had brought it from the sea.



Things to do *after* reading the story

The mermaid gave Tom Taffet a thousand yards of sea as a gift for setting her free, and also as proof that she existed. Draw a picture of your idea for what you would do to prove that you had seen a mermaid.


THERE'S THE SOUND OF THE OCEAN AGAIN! WHERE IS THAT COMING FROM?

The Rabbit and the Lion

Retold by Sharon L. Pugh
and B. K. Sharma

Things to do *before* reading the story

The following story has a lion and a rabbit in it. Think about their strengths and weaknesses. Which would you rather be, a lion or a rabbit? Why?

Long ago in a forest, all the animals lived in perfect harmony. The birds flew in the air, the monkeys and squirrels climbed in the trees, and the other animals walked about on the ground without thought of harm. But then one day the Lion, who was the king of the forest, decided that it was time for a change in policy. He called all the animals together to share his idea.

"My dear subjects," he began. "I have been thinking seriously about your happiness."

All the animals smiled and nodded because they were happy that their leader was concerned about their welfare.

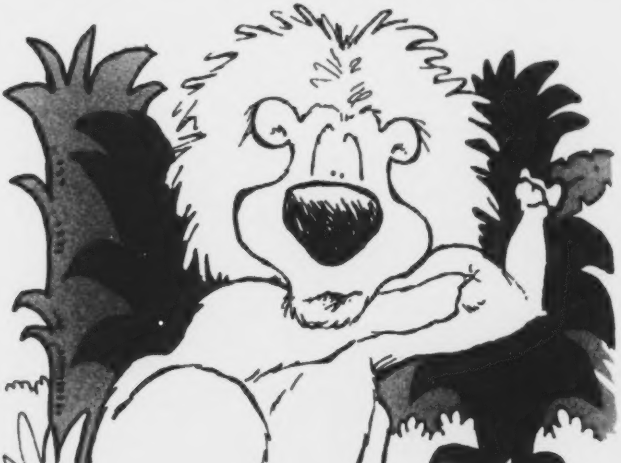
"As we all know," the Lion went on, "a kingdom is only as strong as its leader."

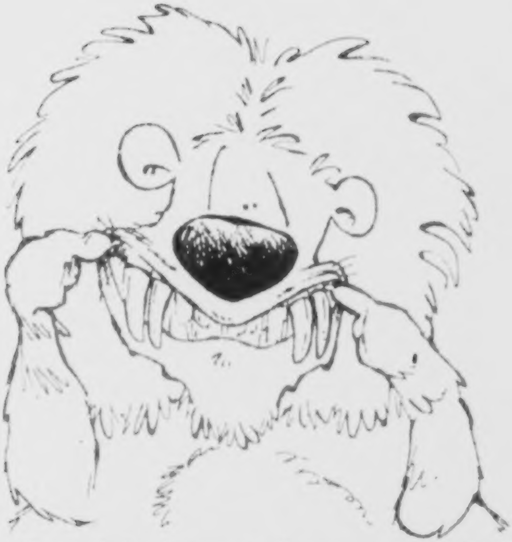
The animals nodded again, but this time with a little uncertainty because this was a new idea to them. But they continued to listen attentively.

"For that reason," the Lion proceeded, "I think you will agree that it would be best if I were as big as possible."

The animals shrugged. As far as they were concerned, the lion's size was just fine. He was bigger than any of them. They waited curiously to hear what he would say next.

"I need bigger muscles," said the Lion. The animals all looked at his powerful body and thought his muscles were already very impressive.





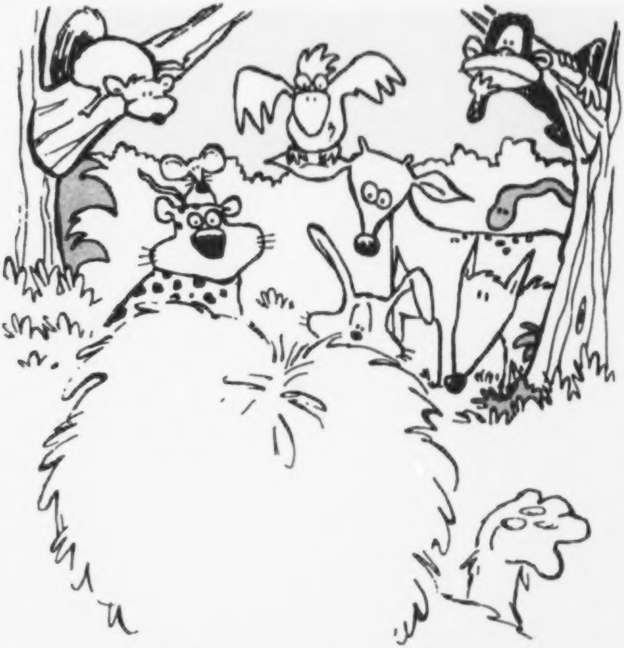
"I need the longest, sharpest teeth in the forest," the Lion declared, and the animals couldn't help wondering who had them now if he didn't.

"I need, in short, to do some body-building," concluded the Lion, "for that is the only way I can be the strongest leader for all my subjects. Don't you agree?"

The animals nodded again. What the Lion said seemed to make some sense not only because he was the largest animal in the forest but also the king. To agree with him was the obvious thing to do.

The Lion smiled. "Excellent," he said. "Since we all agree on this point, it seems clear we will agree on the next. For my body-building program to be successful, I will need a change of diet."

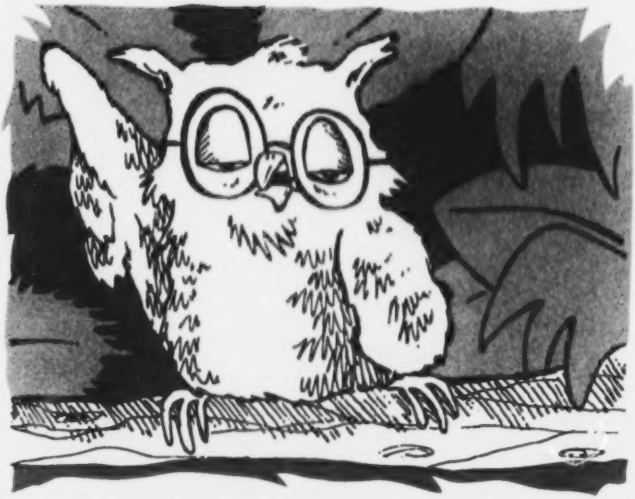
Now the animals fell silent, for they sensed a new meaning in the Lion's last words. A change of diet? What in the forest was there for him to change his diet to? They all had access to the same food that grew in the trees and on the bushes and in the meadows around them. What could a change of diet for the Lion mean?



"From now on," said the Lion, "I must have meat. That means that each day one of you—for the good of the kingdom, of course—must be my dinner." A gasp went up from the crowd. The animals all stared at the lion with their mouths open in disbelief. The Lion, however, paid no attention. He simply went on with his announcement:

"This schedule will begin tomorrow. Between now and then, you can decide among yourselves who will be first, and in what order the others will follow. I'll leave the menu up to you." And with a chuckle at his own little joke, the Lion gave a swish of his tail, indicating that the speech was over, and dismissed the crowd.

The animals gathered together with many chirps, chatters, howls, barks, snorts, growls, and bleats. The Lion's command had put them in a state of panic. Eventually, he planned to eat them all! What could they do?



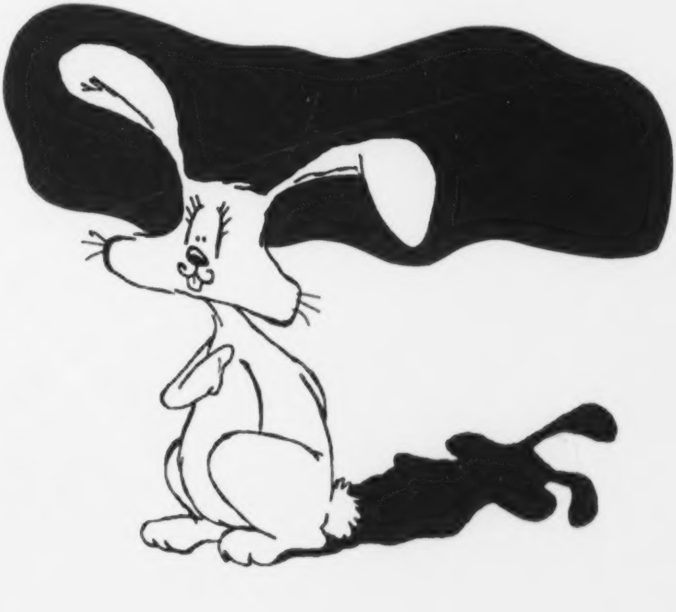
"Well," said the Owl, who had been consulted for his wisdom, "I guess we have to decide who is the least important, and begin there. That will give time for the more important animals to decide what else to do."

But the animals had never thought of themselves in this way. They were all animals, and no one was considered more important than any other. Therefore, it was difficult for them to understand why anyone should be eaten, except that the Lion had commanded it.

"No," said the Monkey, who was known for his cleverness. "It would take too long to decide that, and in the meantime, the Lion will just come along and eat whomever he pleases. We will have to go by chance and draw straws. Whoever gets the shortest straw wins, or I should say loses. Since I have hands, I'll hold the straws."

"Wait," said the Eagle, who had the sharpest vision of the lot. "I see what you're up to. You'll be safe that way, and no one should have an unfair advantage. I think we should ask for a volunteer."

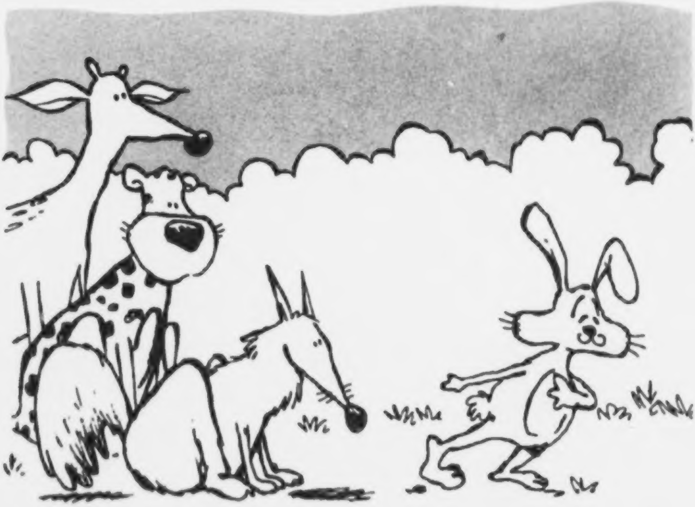
There was a pause. The animals all looked around at each other and down to the ground. They agreed with the Eagle, but no one wanted to volunteer to be the first animal to be eaten by the Lion. As the sun slipped down in the West, casting a longer and darker shadow over their gathering, they pondered the problem and wondered what to do. And then, just as the last beam of light was slipping away, the Rabbit stepped forward. "I'll volunteer," she said.



The other animals looked at the Rabbit in astonishment because rabbits were not, generally, known for their courage. Some of the others, such as the Fox and the Wolf, felt a little sheepish; but then they decided that the Rabbit was more foolish than brave. "We will let her do this, since she has volunteered," they said, "and that will give us more time to think."

The next day at dinner time, the animals all assembled before the Lion. "Who will be my dinner?" he asked. To his surprise, the Rabbit stepped forward without fear, and said, "I will, Your Majesty."

"Well, little Rabbit, I must say you are taking this calmly. Why aren't you afraid of walking into my jaws?" asked the Lion.

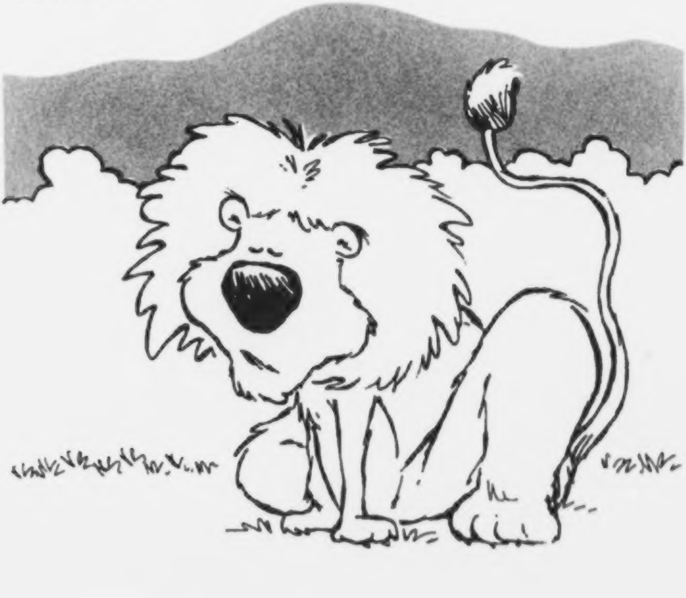


"It is my fate," said the Rabbit, "and my time to bid farewell to the forest and to the world. There is no use being disturbed since it cannot be changed."

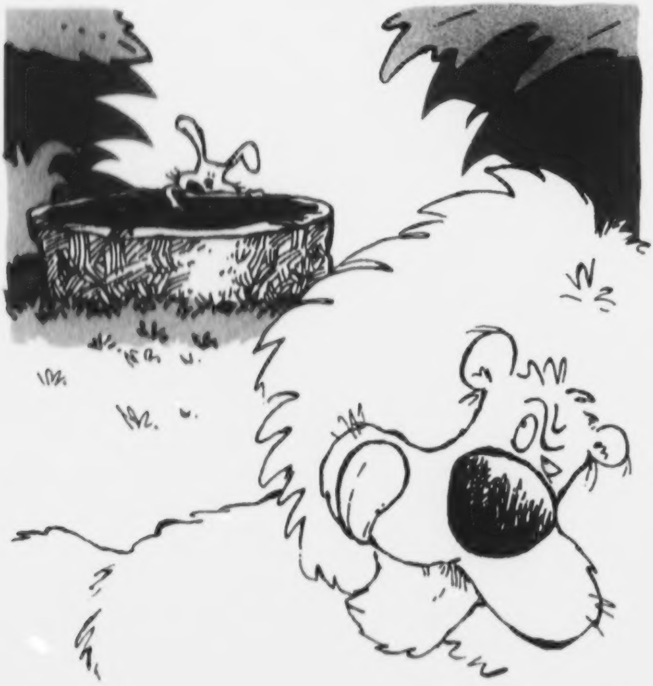
"Very admirable," said the Lion. "And since you are setting such a good example for your peers, let me ask, is there anything you would like as your final wish before you go forward to your destiny?"

"Well, yes, now that you mention it," replied the Rabbit. "I do have one request."

"What is that?" asked the Lion, who was already licking his chops. "It had better not take much time."



"Oh no," said the Rabbit. "I simply want the privilege of taking one last cold drink of water from the well."

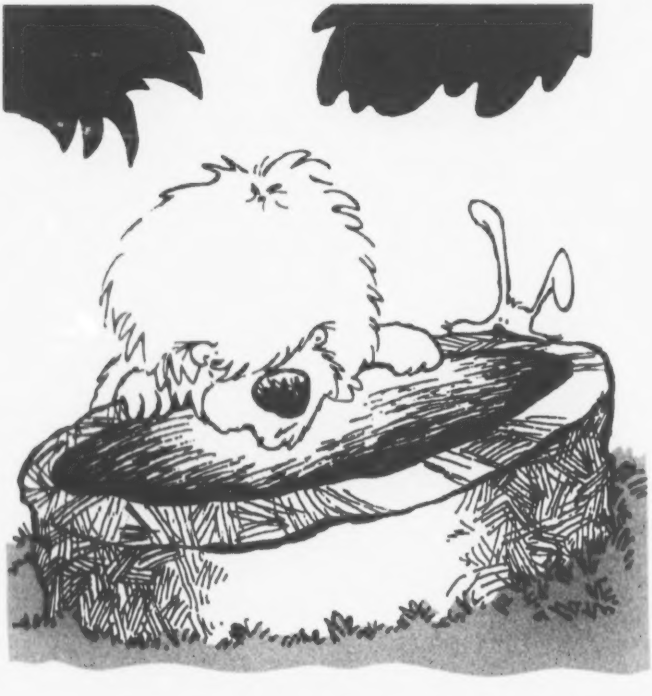


"Well," said the Lion, "that can't hurt. It will give me a minute or two to set my table." He rubbed his paws together in anticipation of his feast. While the animals watched, the Rabbit hopped over to the well and leaned over the side to bring up the bucket. But suddenly she jumped back, letting the bucket fall back to the bottom.

"Lion, Lion," she cried. "There is another Lion in the well!"

"Impossible!" roared the Lion. "I am the only lion in this forest, and I am the king. You are mistaken. Get over here, and let's get started with my meal."

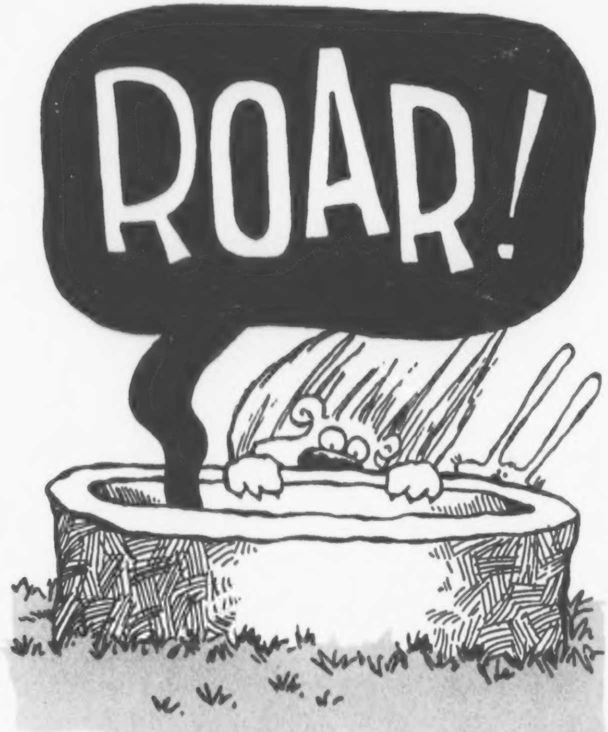
The Rabbit peeped over the side of the well again and jumped back once more. "Oh dear, oh dear!" she cried. "I am sure he is climbing out!"



The Lion was on his feet at once. "We'll see what this is all about," he growled, and he charged over to the well. Leaning over the side, he looked down into what was indeed the face of another lion.

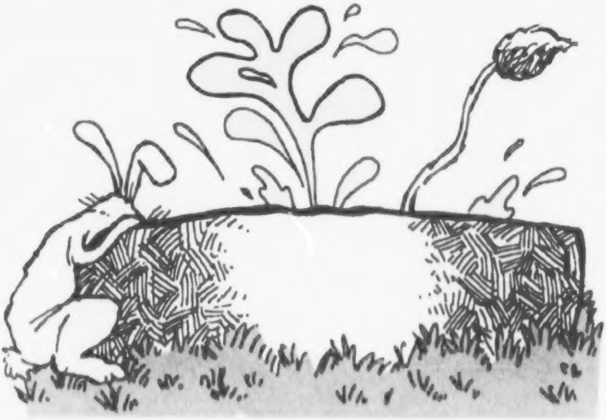
"Show your teeth!" shouted the Rabbit. "That will frighten him away." And the Lion bared his great fangs. But the lion in the well only did the same thing.

"Roar!" shouted the Rabbit. "Then he will know he has come to the wrong place." And the Lion opened his mouth and roared as loud as he could, but the roar that came back from the lion in the well was even deeper and more ferocious.



"He's challenging you!" yelled the Rabbit. "You can't let him do that! Go after him now, or your authority will be lost. You're on the top and he's on the bottom, so you can't lose. Go after him! Go after him!" The Lion then flattened his ears, curled his lips back in a snarl, projected his claws, and leaped into the well.

SPLASH!



And that was the end of the Lion.

Things to do *after* reading the story

The lion in the story used his size and strength to control the other animals. Many people use violence to try to solve their problems. Can you think of other ways to work out difficulties?

We hope you have had fun with these stories!

Books of Special Interest to Parents

How Can I Prepare My Young Child for Reading? by Paula C. Grinnell. Presents ideas to assist parents in preparing their children for reading. Focuses on children from birth through kindergarten.

You Can Help Your Young Child with Writing, by Marcia Baghban. Suggests methods parents can use to help develop their children's writing at home. Offers writing and reading activities.

Beginning Literacy and Your Child, by Steven B. Silvern and Linda R. Silvern. Recommends ways parents can participate in the development of their children's literacy. Provides activities for talking, reading, writing, and listening.

Helping Your Child Become a Reader, by Nancy L. Roser. Provides suggestions for parents to help them encourage their children to read. Offers several practical activities for parents.

Creating Readers and Writers, by Susan Mandel Glazer. Suggests parents (1) encourage the use of language, (2) build positive attitudes toward reading, writing, and speaking, and (3) demonstrate the purposes of literacy. Includes book suggestions classified by age groups.

You Can Encourage Your High School Student to Read, by Jamie Myers. Offers practical ideas parents can use to encourage their teenagers to read more. Shows how reading can serve adolescents' needs and presents future needs that reading can fulfill.

Your Child's Vision Is Important, by Caroline Beverstock. Discusses how vision affects school work, how different eye problems affect vision, and how to spot vision problems. Includes suggestions for dealing with vision difficulties.

Encouraging Your Junior High Student to Read, by John L. Shefelbine. Discusses why reading for pleasure is important. Suggests how to find time for reading, gather a variety of reading materials, and help a child who has difficulty reading.

Cost per booklet is $1.75

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840

101 Ideas to Help Your Child Learn to Read and Write
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Stories for Children and Parents:

1. Make the story fun for children—your primary audience. The adult reading along will enjoy the story if the child does.
2. Make sure that your story is acceptable to parents. We do not want parents to reject the story because it is inappropriate for their children. Writing a story that is interesting to children and at the same time pleasing to parents is a big challenge.
3. Your story should be no longer than eight double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.
4. Correct grammar and syntax are important. For the most part, we choose to model correct standard English.
5. Be careful about the vocabulary you use in your story. Rule out really long and difficult-to-pronounce words.
6. Make your stories gender inclusive. Do not use sexist terminology or ideas. Our stories must be interesting to both boys and girls.
7. You may illustrate your own story, but the illustrations must be line drawings in pen and ink only. The drawings must be able to be scanned, so too much detail will not work.
8. Stories that have action and dialogue work well for the audio portion of the magazine.

Articles for Parents:

1. Articles should contain practical information and helpful strategies. Anecdotes and other experiences modeling useful learning methods are particularly desirable.
2. Your article should be no longer than four double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.

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Future Issues of *Parents and Children Together*

American History
Art Education
Expressing Yourself through Writing
Speaking and Listening Skills
Improving Your Child's Memory
Collaborative Learning
Developing Your Child's Vocabulary

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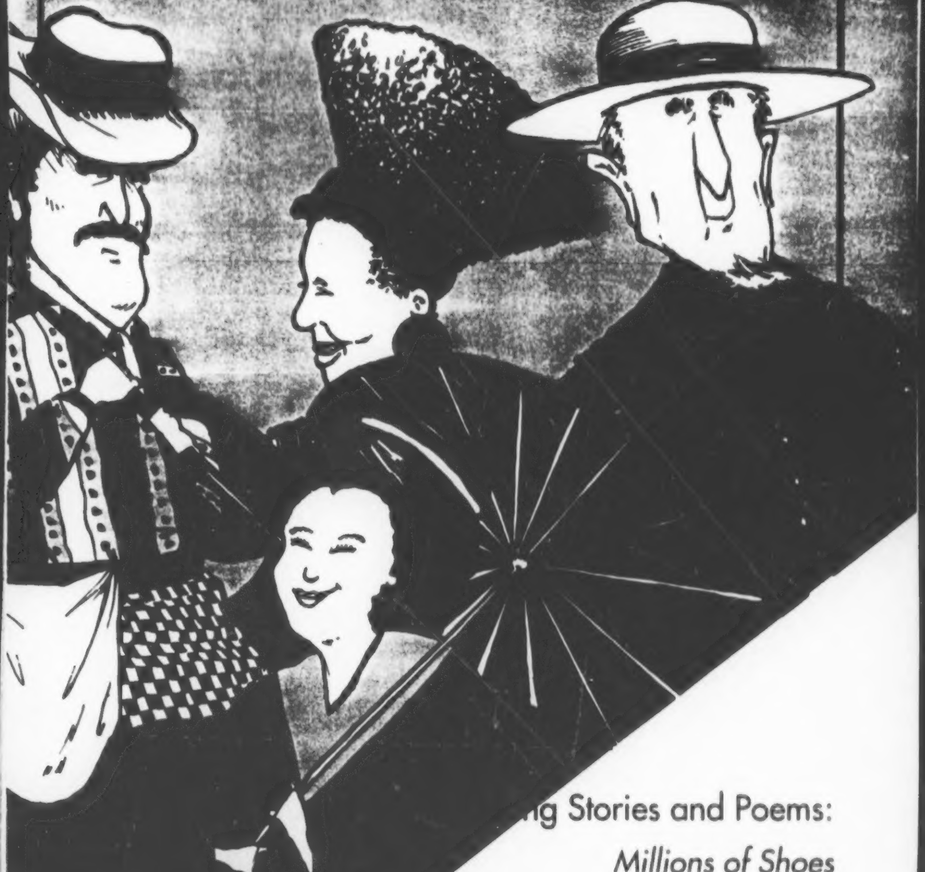
May
1992

Parents and Children Together

Different Peoples of the World



ng Stories and Poems:

Millions of Shoes

The Day It Rained Cats and Dogs

Pig and the Peppermint Moon

Live Oak

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This booklet has a companion audio tape on "Different Peoples of the World." Occasionally there are directions on the tape that do not appear in the booklet or headings in the booklet that aren't spoken on the tape.

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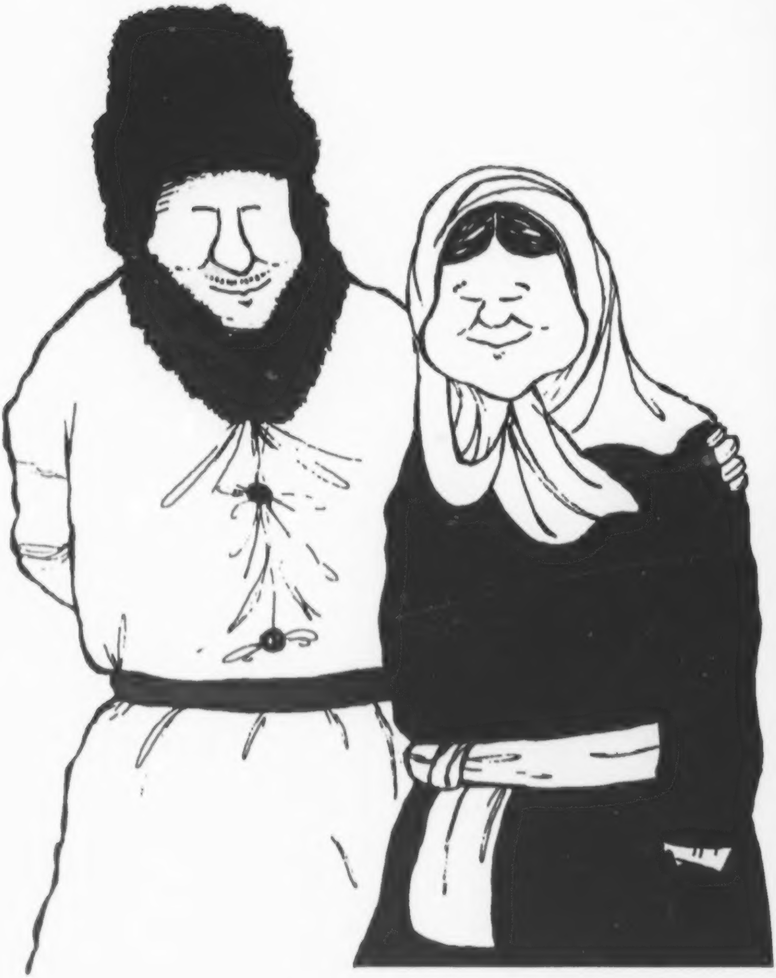
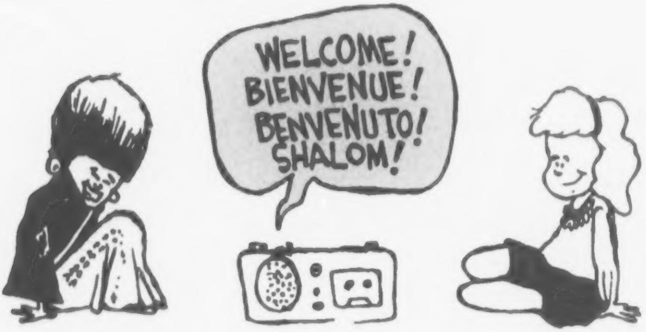


Getting Started

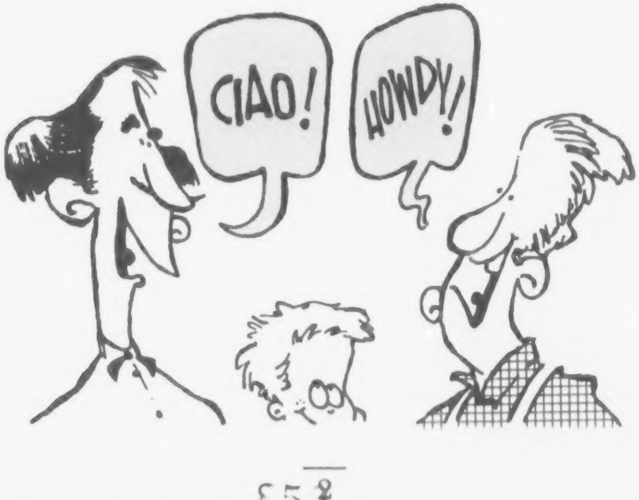
Welcome to this issue of *Parents and Children Together*. Learning about and understanding people, locally as well as globally, helps us communicate more effectively with each other. In this issue we discuss how to share with your children an appreciation of the diverse cultures all around you.


WELCOME!
BIENVENUE!
BENVENUTO!
SHALOM!

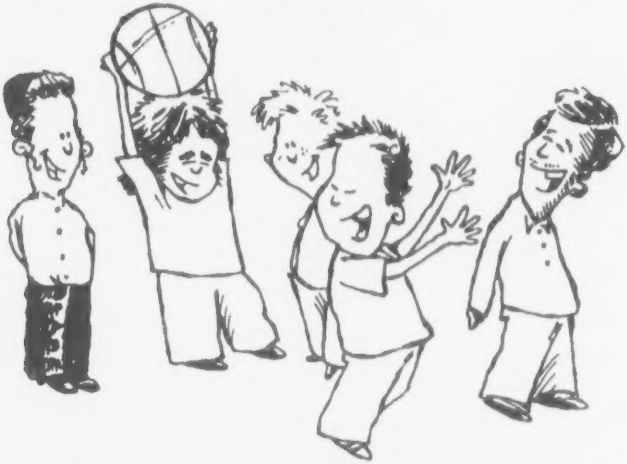
On side B of the tape (and in the second half of the booklet) we have read-along stories and poems. We encourage you to listen to these stories and poems and to read them with your children, so that they can participate in the excitement of story reading. Of course, your child can also listen to the stories and poems alone, if you wish.

The Global Village in My Living Room

My son's great grandfather was known as "the king of Little Italy" during his power days in Cleveland, Ohio. That's one side of the family. The other side of the family is Appalachian Mountain folk who tried to survive on a hill farm in southeastern Kentucky. One group of relatives spoke Italian when they got together; the other group of relatives spoke what they laughingly called "briarhopper" talk. Maybe that mixed culture background explains the group of kids my son now calls his best friends.



We moved from the city of Cleveland to a small midwestern city, and my son gradually brought home a group of middle school boys who made you think the United Nations was gathering in my living room. First came a Japanese boy, who resembled a youth in training to become a Sumo wrestler. Then an Orthodox Jew from New York City joined my son and the Japanese boy after school at our house for snacks and games. Next to join the group was a dark-skinned Indian from New Delhi. His parents belonged to the Sikh group, and the father wore a turban.

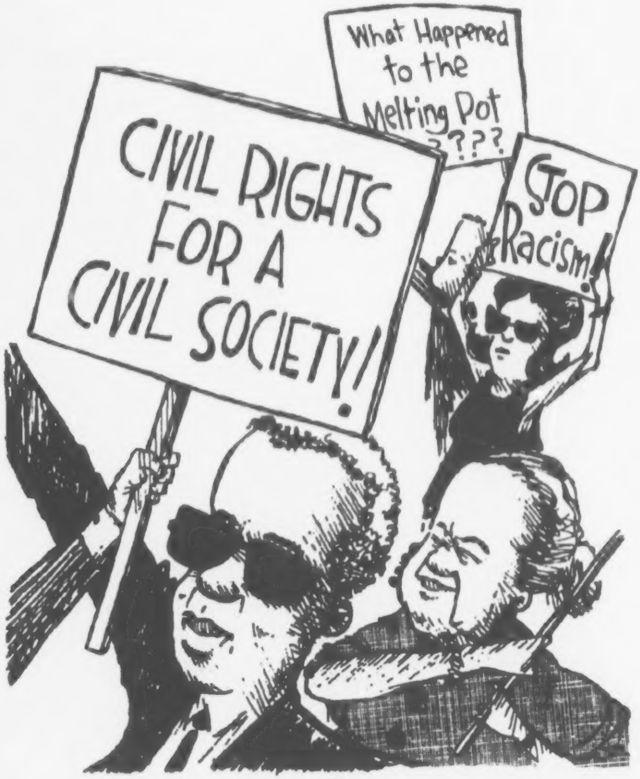


A whole year passed before another boy became part of this group of friends. He was a straw-haired blond kid whose father was most recently a coal miner in a rural section of Indiana. He had no idea what his family roots were. Shortly thereafter, the final member joined their group. He was a brown-skinned Mexican. Spanish was the only language spoken in his house.

Those kids hung out together as best friends throughout high school. Other kids showed up in our living room, but they came and went—as is typical of teen friendships. This motley crew, however, was always there kidding with each other, playing games, and having those serious discussions that young people have when they are trying to figure out school, sexuality, and life. Despite their different backgrounds, they were just kids brought together by circumstances in this middle American town. And, like other kids their age all over the world, they were just trying to find health and happiness.

What makes my son's group so special in my eyes is that it seems to represent the diversity of American society and the respect that we hope these diverse groups will have for one another. As different as they were in race and nationality, in religion and in home culture, they found in their common world of school and in their personalities enough glue to make them fast friends.

In American schools today, and in society in general, we are increasingly aware of the diverse cultures in our country and around the world. With large groups of new immigrants coming to us from Asia and South America, and with the continuing struggle for the civil rights of African Americans, we are reasserting our need to honor diversity while working for the common good. We call this effort "multiculturalism."


What Happened to the Melting Pot ????
CIVIL RIGHTS FOR A CIVIL SOCIETY!
STOP Racism!

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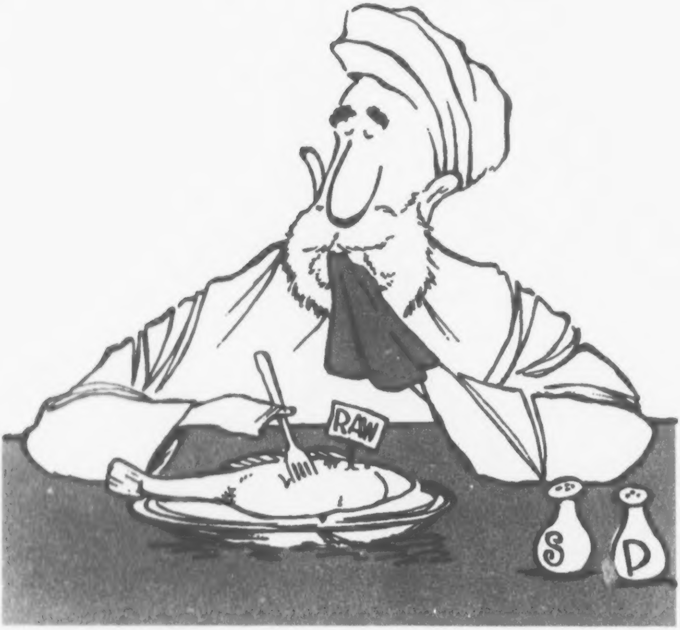
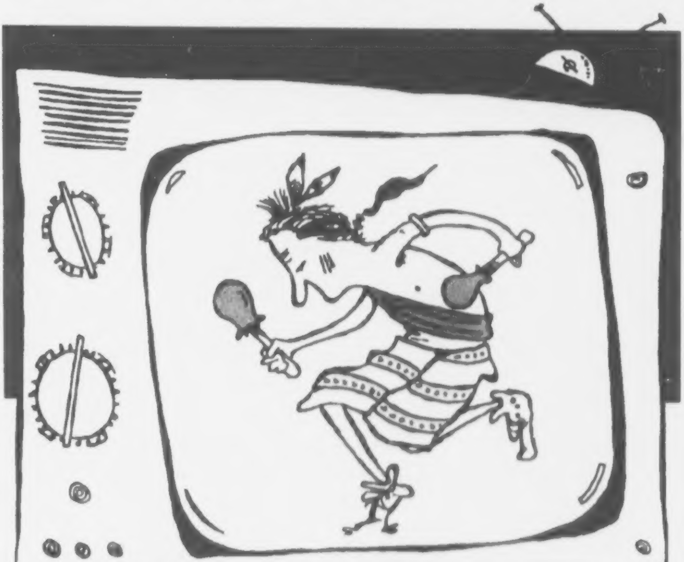


In my son's multicultural group they talked about their family differences as the need arose. In this way they educated each other about their standards, the reasons for certain decisions in their families, and the meaning of certain practices, such as wearing a turban, fasting during a holy season, or eating raw fish. These young boys seemed to have enough sense to respect what seemed odd or different in each other's culture while they gained information. That's probably the major purpose of the multicultural effort in American schools—to learn to appreciate the things we have in common and to maintain respect for our differences.

Racial and Cultural Awareness

As a parent it is important for you to show your child that each race and culture is unique and that none is better than the rest. Children readily accept those who are different as long as teachers and parents show respect for the individuality and worth of every person that they see or meet.

One way that you can promote multicultural awareness in your children is to take them to places and events where they can see the art or musical performances of other groups. If different cultures are featured on radio or television, that gives you an opportunity to experience another culture in action, and to talk about the value of those activities to the people of that race or ethnic group.



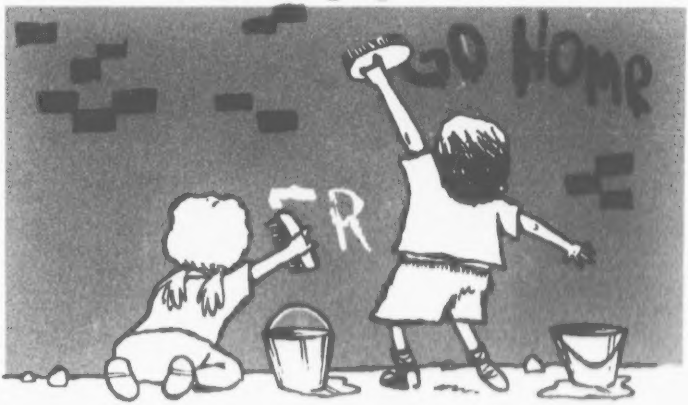
Promoting Understanding

Here are more things that you can do as a parent to promote an understanding and appreciation of other cultures:

- Stress that it is not only OK to be different, but that differences—large and small, found in every aspect of life—are part of what makes life interesting!
- Show that you enjoy exploring your own background, through family photographs, traditional food, holiday customs, and so on.
- Take your children to ethnic restaurants and try some new food.

Bon Appetite
S-CARGO SAUCE

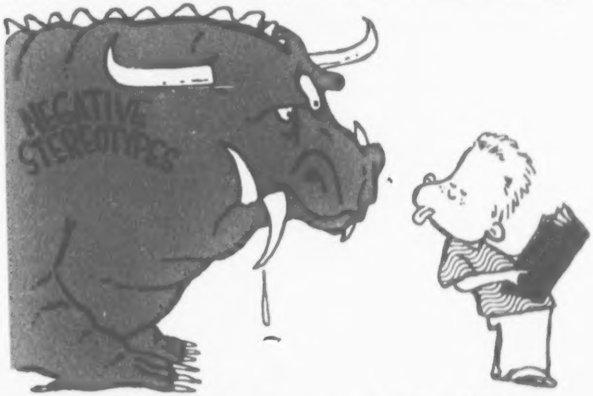
- Go to small theaters where productions feature another culture, and see if the actors or the producers will explain the cultural significance of some of the events in the play.
- Invite friends of different cultures into your home, not because you want them to give a lecture about their culture, but because your friendship sends a positive message to your children.
- Show an interest in the languages of your neighbors of other ethnic groups. Together with your children, learn some words and phrases from one of those languages.



- Work hard in your own life to eliminate language or behaviors that suggest prejudice against members of another race or ethnic group.
- Ask questions about other cultures. Show that you are interested, and that you recognize the value of information in helping you understand your neighbors.

A Developmental Note

Recent research indicates that ages seven through twelve are the years when important attitudes are formed about culture and other people. This is a period of time during which the mental development of children enables them to begin to make lasting judgments about other people and other groups. It seems particularly important, therefore, that parents use these years to promote openness and understanding. Through books, conversations about television programs, visits to museums, and participation in festivals or other cultural events, you help your children shape their attitudes towards others in positive ways. By doing so you are fighting against the tendency to form negative stereotypes, the tendency to create an "us against them" mentality so destructive to any sense of community in American society.



As your child becomes aware of the different peoples of the world, remember that line from a popular song, "United we stand, divided we fall."

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Activities for Fun and Learning

It is a great idea to use games and activities from various cultural backgrounds. Not only do these games promote positive concepts about the different cultures, but they provide children with an awareness of each other's culture and traditions. Capitalizing on children's love for play, games are an imaginative and appropriate way to help children learn about themselves, others, and their world.

WOOSH WOOSH WHOOSH

Many games from other cultures promote the value of cooperation. The games suggested below are generally cooperative in nature, represent a variety of cultures, and are appropriate for children ages 4-10. They also require a minimum of equipment and preparation, offer opportunities to compare cultural values, and are safe and enjoyable.

✧ ✧ London Bridge ✧ ✧

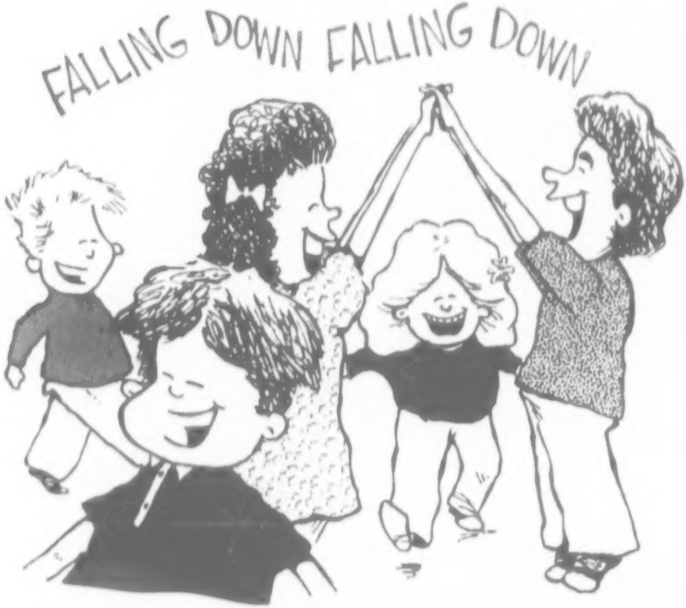
London Bridge is an all-time favorite of children in England and the United States. This game is also played in Germany where it is called "Golden Bridge." An excellent picture book to accompany the game is *London Bridge Is Falling Down,* illustrated by Peter Spier.

LONDON BRIDGE IS FALLING DOWN

London Bridge can be played outdoors or in an open living room area and is appropriate for children ages 4-6. The great thing about this game is that there is no equipment needed and the directions are simple enough—many of us have probably played this game as children ourselves!

Two players form a bridge by holding hands high over their heads. The other children form a line and march under the bridge singing:

London Bridge is falling down,
Falling down, falling down
London Bridge is falling down,
My fair lady.



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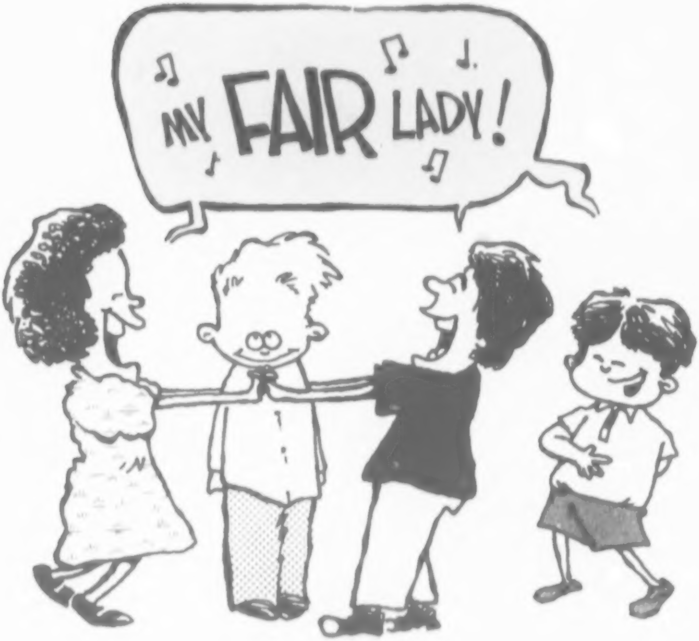
On the last word the bridge is lowered, capturing the child who is under it. Children may then gently toss the captive back and forth with their arms, singing:

Take the key and lock her up,
Lock her up, lock her up,
Take the key and lock her up,
My fair lady.

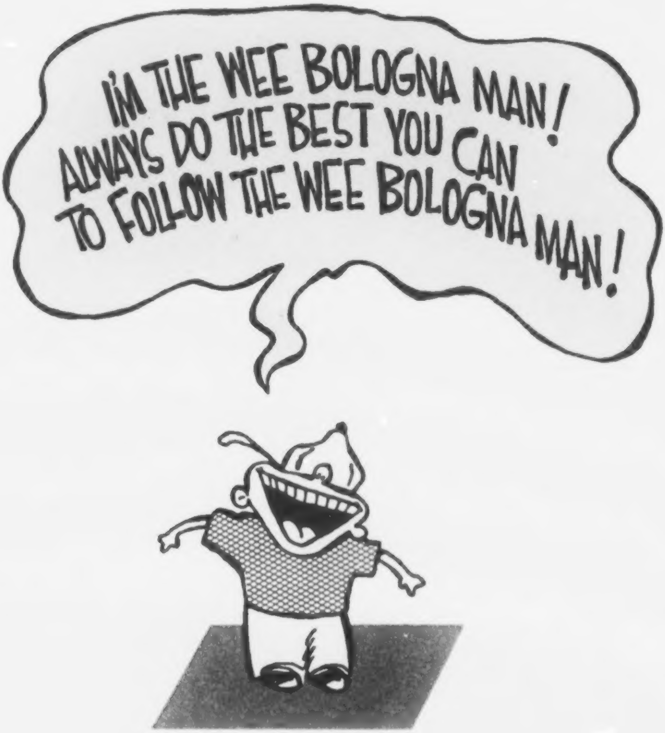

MY FAIR LADY!

At the end of this verse, the captured child becomes one of the bridge parts or part of the line, and the game continues.

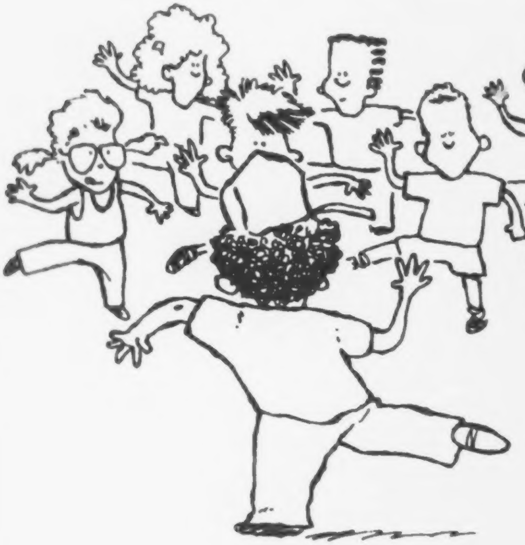
◆ ◆ Wee Bologna Man ◆ ◆

Wee Bologna Man is a follow-the-leader game that is popular with children in Scotland. It is similar to Simon Says that we play in the United States. It can be played outdoors or in an open living room area. It is appropriate for ages 4-6.

Six or more children form a circle with the Wee Bologna Man in the center. He begins to chant:


I'M THE WEE BOLOGNA MAN!
ALWAYS DO THE BEST YOU CAN
TO FOLLOW THE WEE BOLOGNA MAN!

He then pantomimes an action such as eating, jumping in place, or other motions children can imitate. The children in the circle match their actions to his. The moment he changes, they change too. A child who fails to respond quickly must sit in the circle.

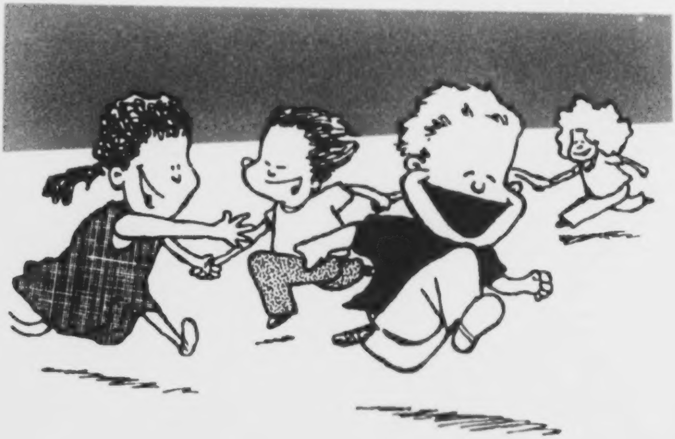


As children are seated, the Wee Bologna Man continues his pantomimes at a faster pace and changes his actions more frequently. When three children are left standing in the circle, the Wee Bologna Man selects one to take his place and the game begins again.

Dragon's Tail

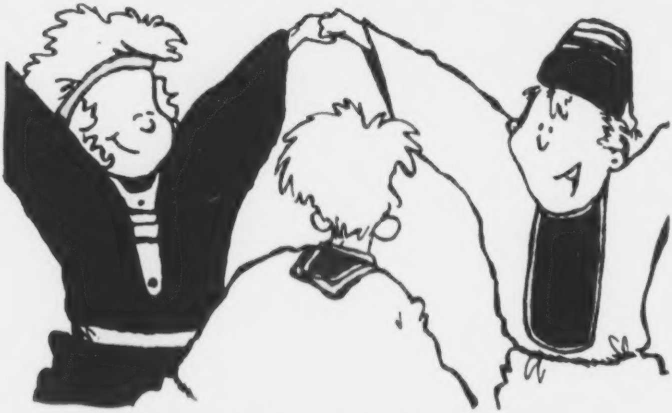
Dragon's Tail is a Chinese game, similar to a game from Africa called Boa Constrictor. This game is best played outdoors or in a gymnasium. You will need two to four ropes to mark boundaries or chalk lines drawn on the playground. Children must stay within these boundaries while playing the game. Any number of children can play.

Select one child to be the "dragon." Whoever is the "dragon" must catch another child and add to the dragon's length. As additional children are added to the "dragon," they must hold hands with the "dragon." Whoever is on the ends uses their free hand to catch another classmate. The "dragon" may be split into smaller dragons to snare runners, but a unit must always be composed of at least two players. When only one runner is left, that child becomes the new "dragon."



✣ ✣ In-and-Out the Windows ✣ ✣

In-and-Out the Windows is a favorite from Iceland. You will need a record player or tape recorder and favorite children's music. You need at least 10 children to play this circle game.

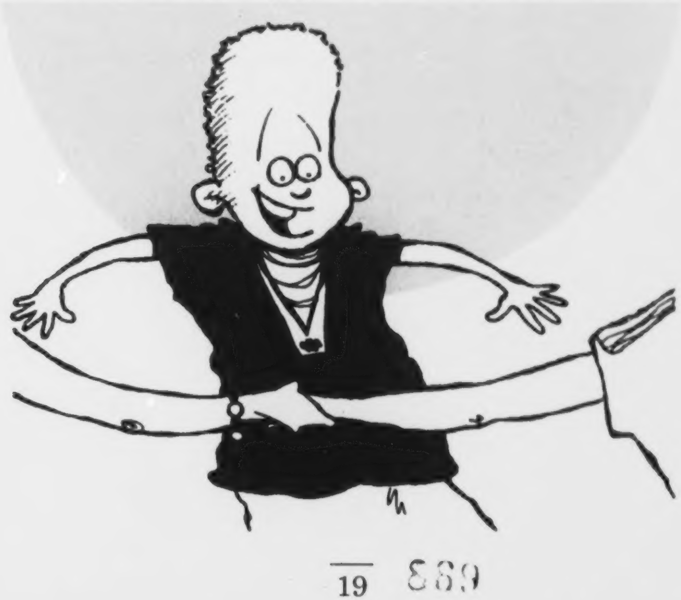


Have the children join hands and form a circle. Select one player to go to the center of the circle to be "It." Have the other players raise their joined hands above their heads. As the music starts, the child who is "It" weaves in and out of the circle, between the pairs of upraised arms. When the music stops, "It" should step in front of the nearest player. Have both children join hands and, as the music starts again, move together weaving their way in and out of the circle. When the music stops again, the two children should step in front of the two players nearest them. Have the four children join hands in a chain-like formation and weave in and out "the windows." The game proceeds until no one is left in the circle.

✣ ✣ Damushere ✣ ✣

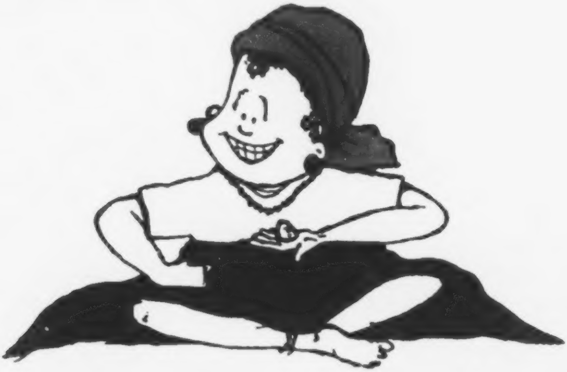
Damushere is an African singing game that is similar to Bear in the Pit and Red Rover. It can be played with a large number of children.

Children join hands in a circle with one child in the center. The child in the center tries to get out of the circle while the other children hold hands tightly to prevent him or her from doing so. As the child in the middle goes from one pair of hands to another, he sings "I am here in the center." The other children respond with "Yes, you are." Finally, the child in the center sings, "I am now going to try to escape." The others respond, "No, you don't!" If the child in the center finds a way out between two children, the rest of the group pursue him. When that child is caught, another member of the group goes into the circle's middle.



❖ ❖ Lasindondo ❖ ❖

Lasindondo is another African game played by a group of children. Button, Button, Who's Got the Button? is the American version of this circle game.

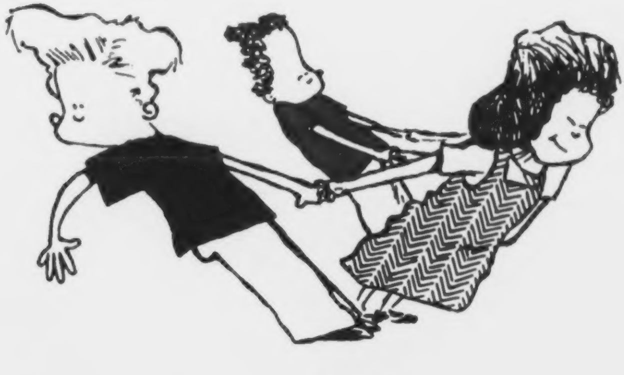


The players sit on the floor in a row with their legs stretched forward. Two leaders are chosen from the group by its members. One leader is the hider; the other is the guesser. The hider gets a small piece of charcoal or a pebble. The other members of the group place their hands (palms up) on top of their thighs. The guesser's eyes must be closed while the hider puts the pebble in the palm of one of the seated players. The players then close their palms together. Next, the guesser indicates where the stone is hidden. If correct, the guesser takes over the hiding of the stone, and the hider now becomes the guesser. If the choice is incorrect, the guesser joins the group, and the person with whom the pebble is found becomes the new guesser.

❖ ❖ Yurt Circle ❖ ❖

Yurt Circle is a game that comes from the tents that Mongolian tribes in China live in. The roof of the tent pushes against the walls to achieve balance, enabling the tent to stand. This activity may work better with older children. You need an even number of children for this game.

Have the children form a circle, face the center, and stand almost shoulder to shoulder holding hands. Go around the circle designating one player “in,” the next player “out” and so on. When the process is complete, each “in” should be between two “outs,” and vice versa. On the count of three, all of the “ins” should lean toward the center of the circle while the “outs” lean backwards. Feet should be kept stationary, and players should support themselves with their hands. Once stable, try counting to three and have the “ins” and “outs” exchange roles. Children must keep holding hands at all times.



✣ ✣ Spin the Dreidel ✣ ✣

Spin the Dreidel is a childhood favorite of Jewish children, especially during the eight days of Hanukkah. A dreidel or an ordinary top can be used. You will need paper and pencil for recording scores.

Use a plate as a guide and draw a circle on a piece of paper or on the ground. Make the circle into eight equal pie-shaped wedges and number each section from one through eight. Have the first player place the dreidel in the center of the circle and spin. If it lands on the wedge marked 5, that is the player's first score. The second player continues in the same manner, recording the score. The game continues until all players have had 5-6 turns. The winner is the one with the highest score.

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Pelele

Pelele is the Spanish name for the ancient festival game of blanket toss. In Old England the blanket toss was a favorite expression of public ridicule. A sturdy blanket approximately 10 to 12 feet wide or large circular canvas with rope grips around the edges is needed for this game. A parachute makes an excellent substitute. When the Spanish play this game, an individual sits or stands on the blanket. For obvious reasons, substitute a ball or doll for a children's version of the game!

Place 20 to 30 players evenly distributed around the edge of the blanket. Each should have a firm hold on the blanket. Toss the ball or doll into the air, but keep in mind the goal is for it to land on the blanket at all times. The blanket responds like a human-powered trampoline. With younger children, a balloon or inflated toy may be used.

This is only a sample of the multicultural games that you can share with children. Your library can provide additional information on a variety of children's games.

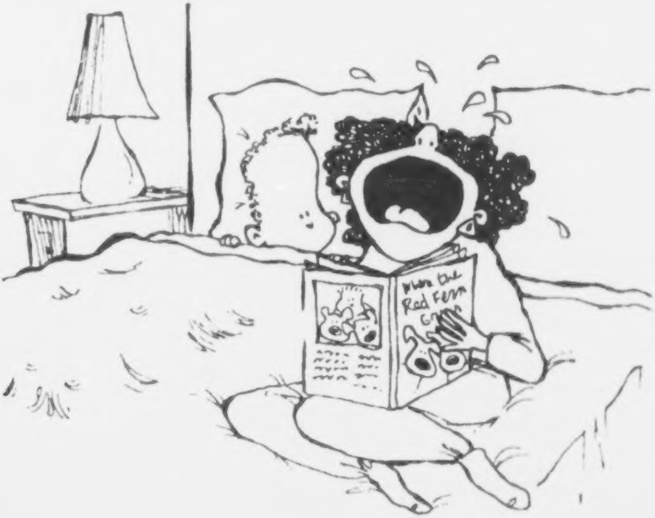
* * *

An Afternoon of Reading Aloud

Cheryl Burnham Denk is the literacy coordinator at the statewide Indiana Literacy Resource Center in Indianapolis, Indiana.

I am one of those parents who believes that hearing our language spoken aloud is very important to the development of speaking, writing, and reading abilities. I have read and talked to my son, Will, since he was born. It was much easier before he started crawling and walking—he hasn't stopped moving since! The only moments I know of that he is not moving around are when he's not with me and sometimes when he's asleep!

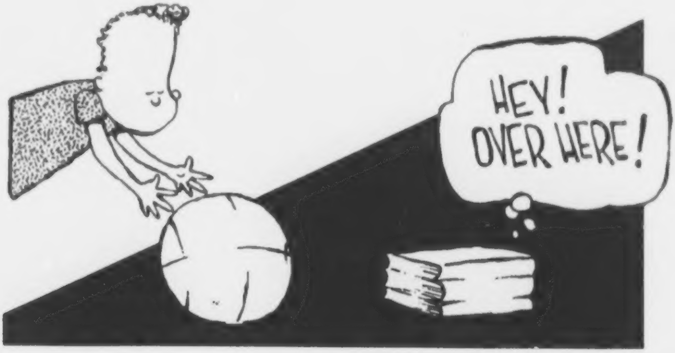
I remember with surprise and great fondness one particular afternoon, about midway into his first grade, that I took the afternoon off when school was out for a half day. We had begun reading novels that year and had spent many enjoyable weeks at bedtime with Wilson Rawls' *Where the Red Fern Grows* and John R. Gardiner's *Stone Fox.* (I also remember the nights I couldn't stop myself from continuing reading after he fell asleep, and the night Will tried to get me to stop crying by telling me, "Mom, it's just a story!")



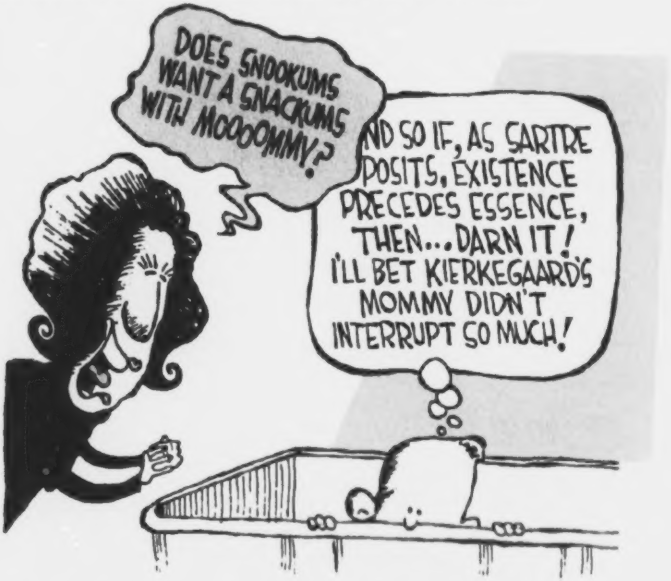
This particular afternoon we began Roald Dahl's *James and the Giant Peach.* We had the whole afternoon ahead of us, and I thought maybe he would sit still for three or four chapters, at the most. After a while, I asked him, "Do you want me to stop here?"

He said, "No." So, I continued. A little later, after I started getting tired of sitting, I asked again, but again, he wanted to continue. (I had expected him to drift off to sleep, since most of our reading is done at bedtime. But I am the one who usually becomes sleepy.) Eventually, I had to do something to get more comfortable, so we tried sleeping bags on the floor, big cushions to prop us up, and took bathroom and snack breaks. Finally, we came to the end of the book. When I looked at my watch, I was amazed that his interest (and my endurance) had lasted for the whole afternoon!

It hasn't happened again. It seems these days, whenever we have extra time, Will wants to play baseball, or basketball, or have friends over. Consequently, he hasn't started reading for his own pleasure or information yet. He has me read those kinds of things to him! But, he's getting the highest grades possible in reading in school and was invited to participate in his second-grade Junior Great Books program. I'm optimistic that the pleasure part will eventually come for him.


HEY!
OVER HERE!

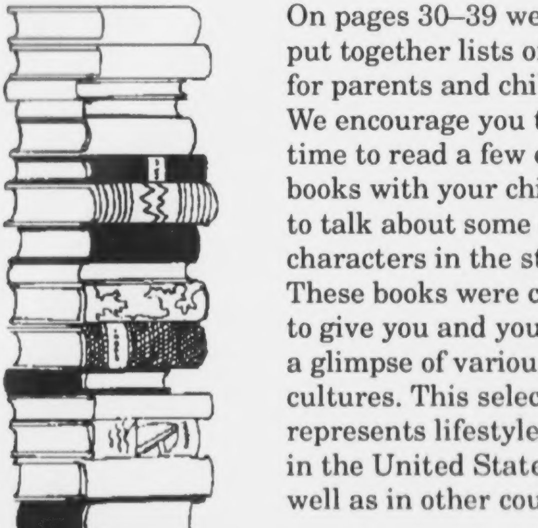
One thing I think might have made a difference, besides our routine read-aloud sessions, is that I never talked "baby talk" to Will.


DOES SNOOKUMS WANT A SNACKUMS WITH MOOOOMMY?
ND SO IF, AS SARTRE POSITS, EXISTENCE PRECEDES ESSENCE, THEN...DARN IT! I'LL BET KIERKEGAARD'S MOMMY DIDN'T INTERRUPT SO MUCH!

Jim Trelease, author of *The New Read-Aloud Handbook,* maintains that children should start hearing, as early as possible, the same English language that we expect them to speak, read, and write, instead of a distorted version. Trelease's excellent handbook contains lists of books, divided by appropriate age groups, which are great for reading aloud.

Now Will and I, as we continue to read stories aloud together, are up to the eighth in a series of 19 *Boxcar Children* books. But that's another story.

Books for Parents and Children



On pages 30–39 we have put together lists of books for parents and children. We encourage you to take time to read a few of these books with your child, and to talk about some of the characters in the stories. These books were chosen to give you and your child a glimpse of various cultures. This selection represents lifestyles found in the United States, as well as in other countries.

At the beginning of this issue, we mentioned that side B of the audio tape contains read-along stories and poems. You may want to take some time to look ahead at these stories and poems before you read along with your child. It is also important to talk about them ahead of time.

Before reading the story, talk about the title or things that might happen in the story. Then, after the story is finished, talk about it again. By the way, if in the middle of the story something funny or interesting happens, it's O.K. to stop the tape and discuss the event, or ask your child questions such as "Which pair of your shoes do you like the most?" or "What is the moon made of?" These questions make your conversations about the story more meaningful and more valuable.

When you and your child are ready, turn the tape to side B and listen to the stories as you read along together, or you may wish to read the stories aloud while your child reads along in the booklet.

Books for Parents

City Kids, by Susan Haven and Valerie Monroe. Gives parents tips on how to raise children in an urban environment. Covers day care, schools, apartment living, indoor and outdoor activities, cultural life, and city values, freedoms, and responsibilities. Includes practical material, as well as quotations from parents and children who are city dwellers.

The Clustering of America, by Michael J. Weiss. The author divides America into forty neighborhood types instead of the typical fifty states. Classifying areas by values, lifestyles, and several other factors, he shows various clusters of society from "Blue Blood Estates" to "Public Assistance." By looking at the trends, habits, and ideals of different clusters, readers see how neighborhoods influence what we eat, drive, wear, and think.

The Silent Language, by Edward T. Hall. Defines and discusses culture in general terms. Explains how cultural factors influence people's nonverbal communication, and demonstrates how people interpret unspoken language in different ways according to their cultural background. Emphasizes the concepts of space and time in different societies.

Books for Parents and Children to Share

We divide our book selections into three age categories (4-6, 6-8, 8-10). Some children will be able to read several of the books by themselves, but other books might be too difficult. With your children, look through the books at a library, school, or bookstore, and decide which ones they can read. The books that are too difficult remain possible choices since you can read them aloud to your children.

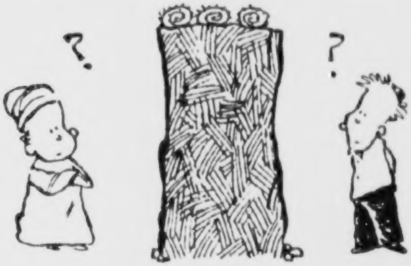
TARZAN'S TEDDY

Ages 4-6

Charlie's House, by Reviva Schermbrucker (Viking). Charlie lives in South Africa in a house made of iron sheets with cement floors. While playing, Charlie builds his own pretend house and dreams of a time when he will live there. By looking at Charlie's life with his granny and mother, you can show children that a home can be built with love, imagination, and determination, regardless of the house's construction.

Lion Dancer: Ernie Wan's Chinese New Year, by Kate Waters and Madeline Slovenz-Low. Ernie and his family live in Chinatown. Ernie is preparing to celebrate Chinese New Year and his first Lion Dance on the streets of New York City. Provides an opportunity to discuss holidays that different groups celebrate.

Just Like Us, by Hiawyn Oram (Morehouse-Barlow). Billy #1 lives on one side of a wall, and Billy #2 lives on the other side of the same wall. They have both been told that the people who live on the opposite side of the wall are wicked. After Billy #1 goes over the wall, he discovers that people on both sides are just alike. Shows that oftentimes people are afraid of what they are not familiar with. Learning about other people and their cultures will sometimes reduce our fears and doubts about them.



Jafta's Father and *Jafta's Mother,* by Hugh Lewin (First Avenue Editions). Jafta loves his mother and father very much. He describes his life with them in South Africa and some of his thoughts and feelings about them. Enables children to see that many childhood experiences are the same no matter where people live or what customs they practice.

Night on Neighborhood Street, by Eloise Greenfield (Dial). Through compelling illustrations and touching poetry, this book portrays relationships, events, customs, and emotions found in a Black urban neighborhood. Parents may want to use this book to give their children a glimpse of city life, or to discuss the universality of bonds between friends and family members.

On the Pampas, by María Cristina Brusca (Henry Holt). Maria leaves the city to stay with her grandparents on their ranch. She learns to ride well enough to bring in the horses by herself. Readers encounter some of the occupations and customs found in South America. Guides children in seeing cattle ranchers as real people who are trying to support themselves, and not as "bad" people who destroy rain forests. Parents can talk about the issue as a global problem that requires worldwide cooperation to solve.

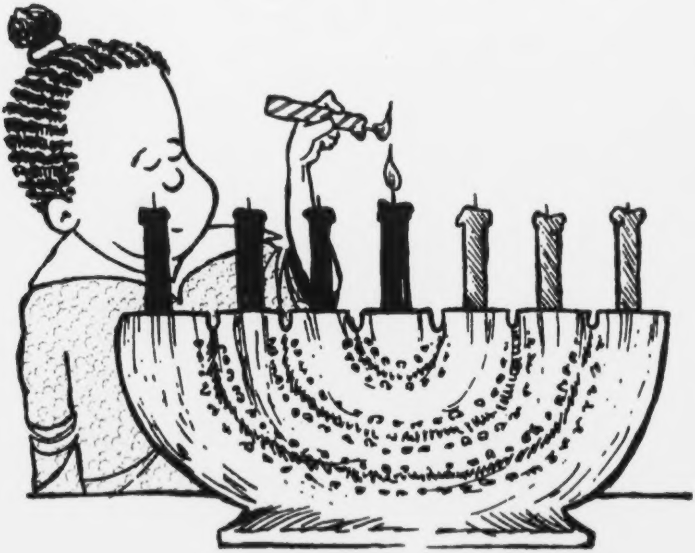
Ages 6-8

Everybody Cooks Rice, by Norah Dooley (Carolrhoda Books). Carrie is searching her neighborhood to find her brother, Anthony. As she goes from house to house, she discovers that even though rice is being served for dinner in each home, all the dishes are unique because the families are from different countries. Includes recipes for the rice dishes so that parents and children can try them and explore food from various cultures.

Fly Away Home, by Eve Bunting (Clarion Books). Andrew and his father live in an airport. They are working to improve their situation, but have several obstacles to overcome. Brings to light the situation of the homeless in this country. Parents may use this book with their children as a springboard to discuss ways to help homeless people in their own community.

Kimako's Story, by June Jordan (Houghton Mifflin). While Kimako is taking care of Bucks, a friend's dog, her mother allows her to leave their Harlem apartment. She feels safe with Bucks for protection and enjoys her freedom to tour the neighborhood. Provides poem puzzles about Kimako's life that parents and children may complete together.

Kwanzaa, A. P. Porter (Carolrhoda Books). The holiday called Kwanzaa celebrates African-American culture, and establishes a way for families to commemorate their heritage. Describes the origins and practices of Kwanzaa and gives a list of items needed for the holiday festivities. African-American families can share this book and learn about their culture's special celebration, while Americans of other backgrounds can enjoy learning about this holiday.



People, by Peter Spier. Compares people from all over the world, in terms of their physical appearance, clothes, homes, recreation, pets, feasts and holidays, food and drink, religions, jobs, and languages. Celebrates the uniqueness of different peoples, and through vivid illustrations furnishes a way parents can introduce various cultures from around the world.

Pueblo Boy: Growing Up in Two Worlds, by Marcia Keegan (Cobblehill Books). Timmy Roybal leads an active life in present day New Mexico, and participates in the traditions of his Pueblo Indian ancestors. Illustrates how individuals may preserve their heritage and also live in a contemporary world.

Ages 8-10

The Call of the Running Tide: A Portrait of an Island Family, by Nancy Price Graff (Little Brown). The Joyce family lives on Swans Island, off the coast of Maine. Through text and pictures, readers can observe how they earn their living fishing and how this livelihood affects their entire lifestyle. Presents a glimpse of a way of life with which most Americans do not come into contact.

An Ancient Heritage: The Arab-American Minority, by Brent Ashabranner (HarperCollins). Examines the cultural experience of Arab-Americans, including their immigration and experiences in the United States. Interviews with several people of this ancestry reveal how they cope with being members of two cultures. Gives a thorough view of a little-known ethnic culture found in the United States.

The American Indians in America, Volume II: The Late 18th Century to the Present, by Jayne Clark Jones (Lerner). Outlines the treatment, history, and change in organization of several American Indian groups. Identifies contributions to current American culture made by American Indians. Parents may want to use this book to supplement what their children learn in school about American Indians.

The Me inside of Me, by T. Ernesto Bethancourt (Lerner). After becoming rich, Alfredo leaves his Los Angeles Mexican neighborhood of working-class people. He experiences prejudice, despite his talent and wealth. In this quick-moving and often humorous story, children can see that racism overrides both talent and ability in some cultures, and needs to be eliminated before there is "justice for all."

Laughing Together: Giggles and Grins from around the Globe, compiled by Barbara K. Walker. (Free Spirit Publishing). This collection of jokes, riddles, puzzles, and rhymes from six continents provides a sampling of humor that transcends geographical and cultural boundaries. Parents and children will be able to learn about other cultures through laughter and fun.

Paper Bird: A Novel of South Africa, by Maretha Maartens (Clarion Books). Presents a grim and graphic view of a young boy's life in South Africa. Adam works selling newspapers to support his family. He must go to work in spite of his sickness, the people threatening him along the road, and the soldiers. Brings to life in story format the plight of youth living under shocking and disturbing conditions.

The People Atlas, by Philip Steele (Oxford University Press). Describes different peoples and their cultures, continent by continent. Looks at housing, currency, food, manners, customs, religion, geography, occupation, animals and vegetation. This book is a suitable way to compare different aspects of various cultures.

Magazines

Also ask your librarian for the following magazines:

Cricket

Faces: The Magazine about People

Highlights for Children

National Geographic World

Skipping Stones: A Multi-Ethnic Children's Forum

* * *

Read-along Stories and Poems

889

40890

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Millions of Shoes

by Larry Dan Brimner

Things to do *before* reading the poem

Name some different kinds of shoes. Who might wear them or when might you wear them?

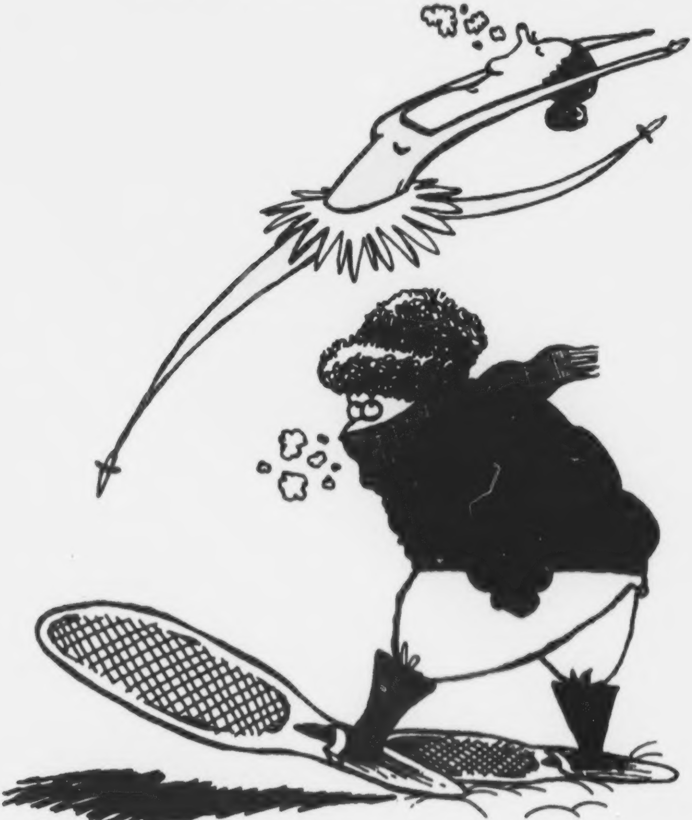
New shoes today
Shoes for my feet
Millions of shoes pound the street.

Big shoes
Little shoes
Shoes that look like duck's feet.

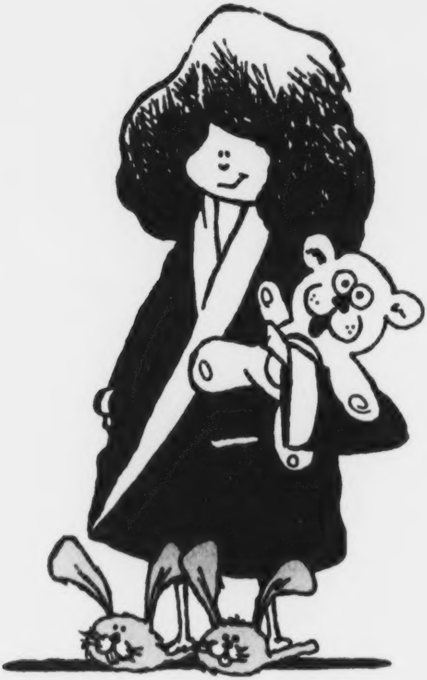
Some to buckle
Some to tie
No tops
Low tops
Even some that are high.

Boots are shoes.
Hip boots
Work boots
Under ten-gallon-hat boots

Shoes for snow
Shoes for play
Shoes to dance ballet.



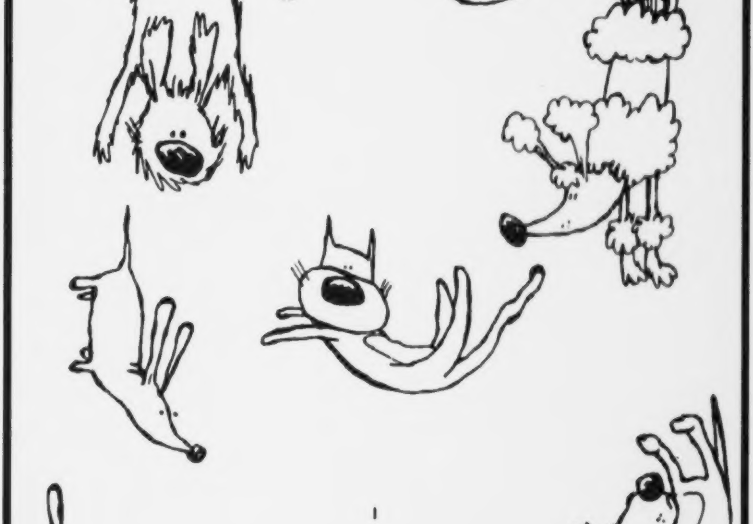
Four wheels
One blade
This pair is made to wade.



And these shoes, slipper shoes,
will end my day.

Things to do *after* reading the poem

What is your favorite kind of shoes? Draw pictures of them and then, below each picture, write about an activity you might do while wearing them.



The Day It Rained Cats and Dogs

by Linda Allen

Things to do *before* reading the story

Do you really think it could rain cats and dogs? Draw a picture of what you think it would look like if it did rain cats and dogs.

It was a curious thing about Mrs. Jenkins, but every once in a while her words had a strange way of coming true.

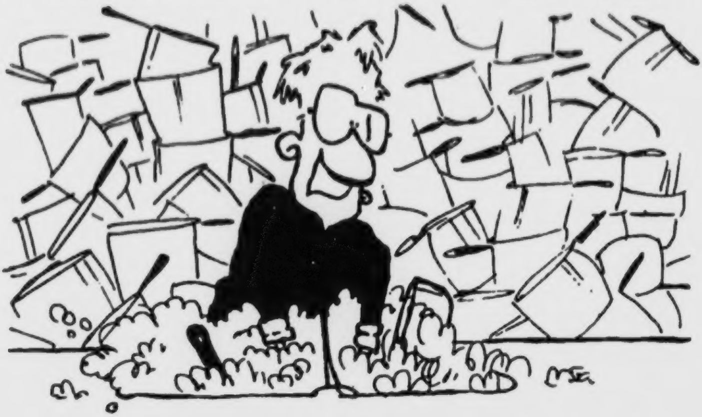
"Oh, blow!" she said to Mr. Jenkins one day after she had stumbled over something in the road. Immediately the wind began to blow so hard that they had to cling to a tree until it stopped.

"My dear," said Mr. Jenkins, straightening his clothes, "you really will have to be careful what you say when these moods come over you. Let's go home, and I will make you a nice cup of tea."

As Mrs. Jenkins sipped her tea, Mr. Jenkins said, "You just sit here quietly, and I'll do the housework today."

"Thank you," said Mrs. Jenkins gratefully. "I'll do as you say, although it does seem a shame to leave all that work to you. The kitchen is quite full of dirty pots and pans."

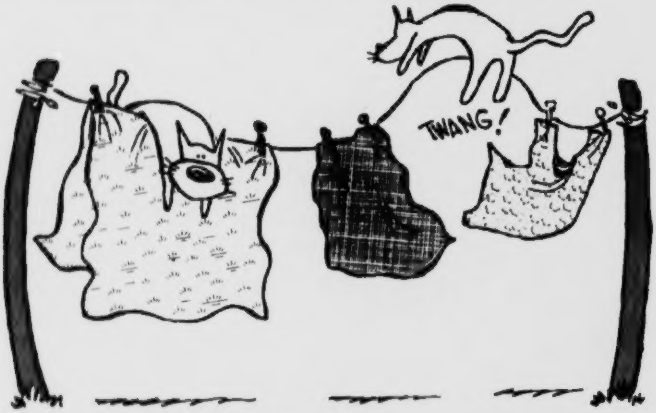
No sooner had she spoken than they heard a great clatter in the kitchen, and when Mr. Jenkins opened the door, he found that he could scarcely get into the room for all the pots and pans. They were piled up on the table and on the shelves, in the sink and on the chairs, from the floor right up to the ceiling. It was late in the evening by the time poor Mr. Jenkins finished washing them all.



The next day Mrs. Jenkins was her usual self, and as the weeks went by, she quite forgot to be careful about what she said. Then one morning, after she had done her washing and hung it outside to dry, she began to feel rather peculiar again. She didn't like to mention it to Mr. Jenkins. I'll just sit down quietly, she thought to herself. Perhaps it will pass off.

She was just about to go into the sitting room when she happened to glance out of the window. "Oh!" she shouted angrily. "Look at that! My washing was almost ready to be ironed, and now look what's happening. It's raining cats and dogs!"

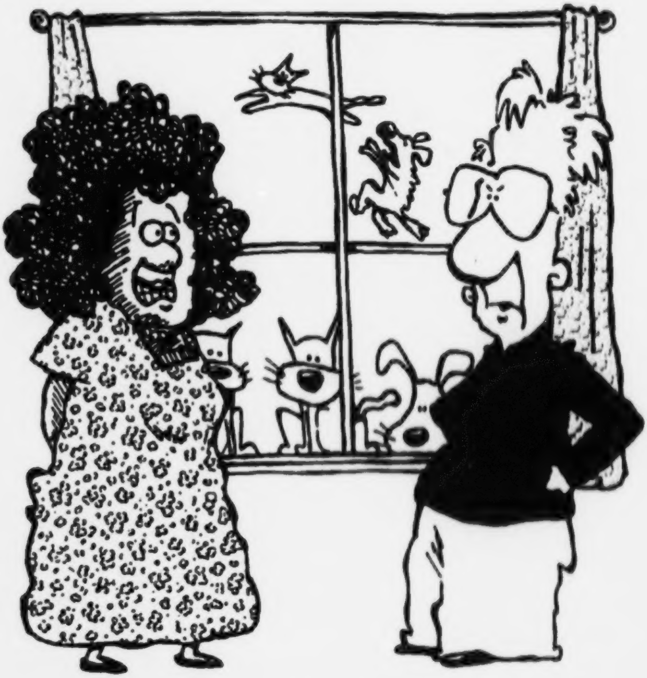
Immediately the black clouds parted, and out of the sky there came an absolute downpour of cats and dogs. Big dogs and little dogs, nice cats and nasty cats—dozens of them falling everywhere—barking and meowing and fighting among themselves as they landed. Some of them splashed into the goldfish pool, and others twanged up and down on the clothesline. They ran up the trees and along the fences. They sat on the window sill and stared in at Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins.



"It's that Mrs. Jenkins again!" cried the neighbors. "She's had one of her spells again. Why can't she be more careful when she feels them coming on? Shoo! Shoo! Go away!"

"It's only a shower," called Mr. Jenkins from an upstairs window. "It will be over in a minute or two."

But it wasn't. All the rest of the morning it rained cats and dogs around the Jenkins's house, until there wasn't a patch of ground or an inch of fence that wasn't being sat upon.



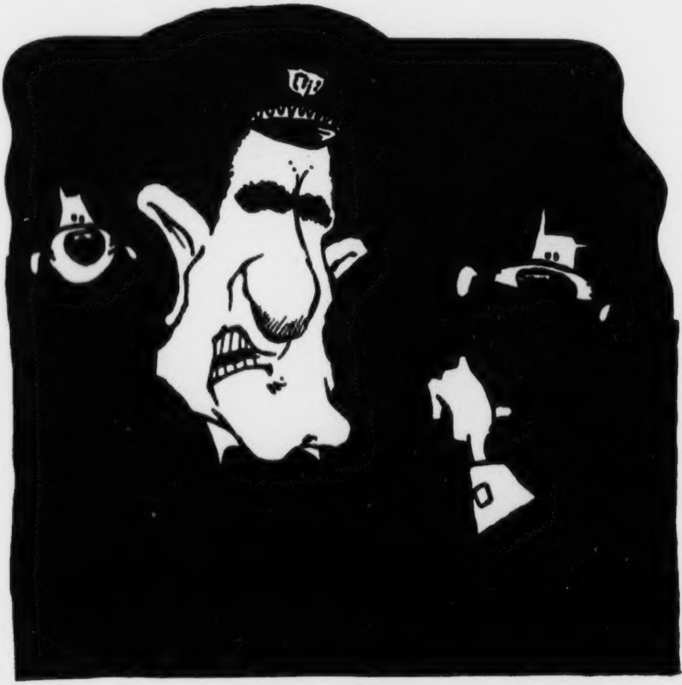
"You've done it this time," said Mr. Jenkins, shaking his head. "You've really done it. Pots and pans were bad enough, but at least we were able to give them away to our friends. Who on earth would want so many damp cats and dogs?"

Just after midday a policeman came to the door. "Are you the owner of these animals?" he asked Mr. Jenkins. "We've had a complaint."

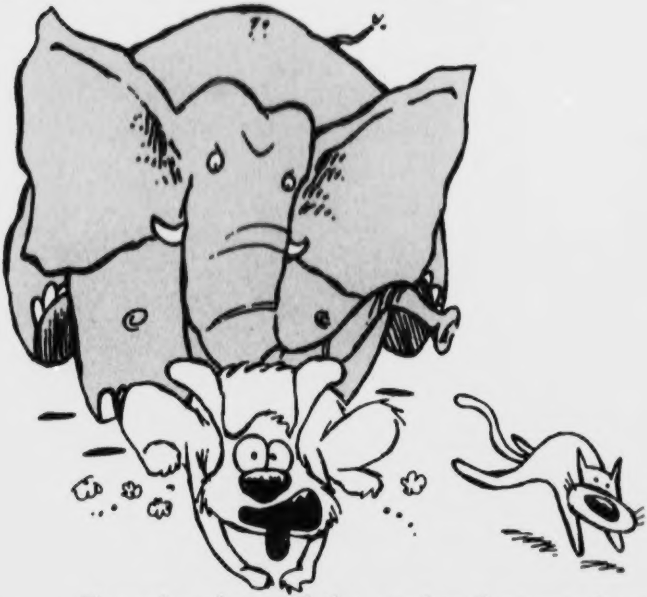
"I'm sorry," apologized Mr. Jenkins. "You see, it's Mrs. Jenkins. She's had one of her spells again."

"I can't help that," said the policeman. "Just keep these animals under control, or we shall have to take action."

"Oh, dear!" wailed Mrs. Jenkins when he had gone. "What can I do? I shall be seeing pink elephants next!"



There were two great thumps, and when Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins looked out of the kitchen window, they saw two pink elephants sitting on the lawn, looking rather dazed. The cats began to spit, and the dogs put their tails between their legs and howled. For a moment the elephants just looked at them; then suddenly they trumpeted loudly and began to chase the cats and dogs.



Round and round the garden they went, and out of the gate, and up the road, and the last that Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins saw of them they were disappearing over the hill.

Mrs. Jenkins went out into the garden and brought in her wash. "I hope I never see anything like that again in the whole of my life," she said.

Which was a good thing to say, because she never did. And from that day to this she hasn't had another spell.

Not yet.

Things to do *after* reading the story

Mrs. Jenkins kept using phrases that have completely different meanings from what the individual words mean. These types of phrases are called idioms. Can you think of any other idioms that Mrs. Jenkins did not use in the story? Ask your parents to share some other idioms that they know.

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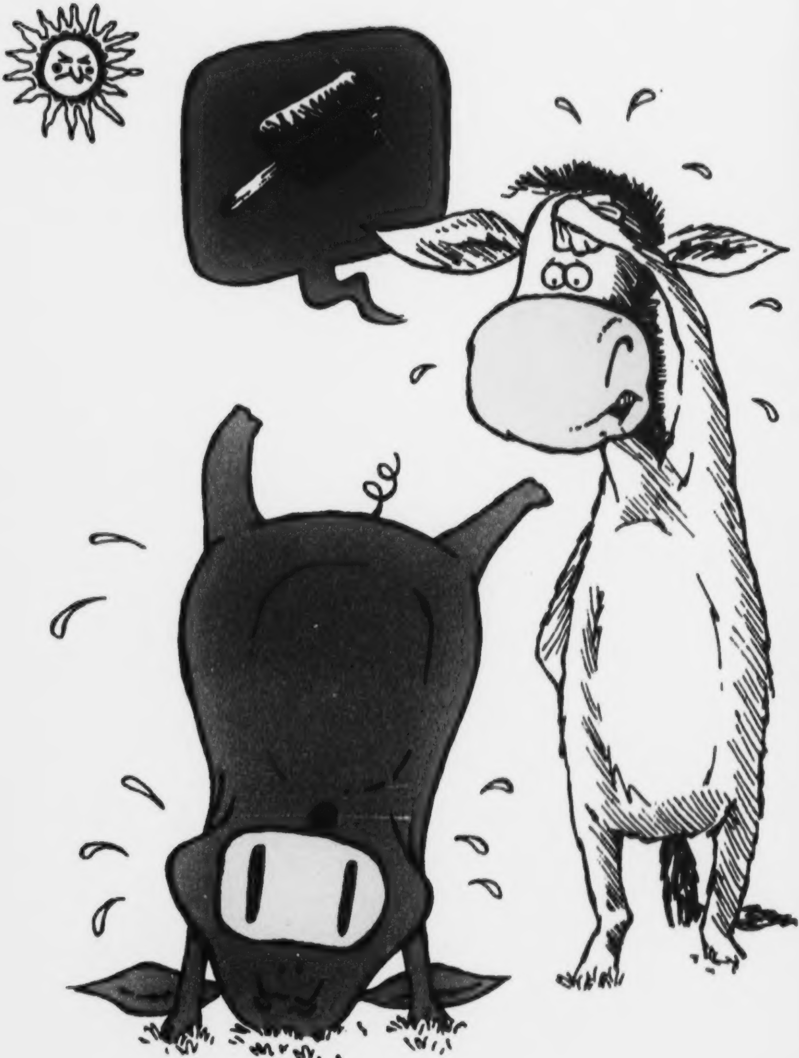


Pig and the Peppermint Moon

by Toby Speed

Things to do *before* reading the story

What would the moon look like if it were made of peppermint? Talk about what a pig and the moon might have in common.

Pig stood on his head, the better to concentrate.

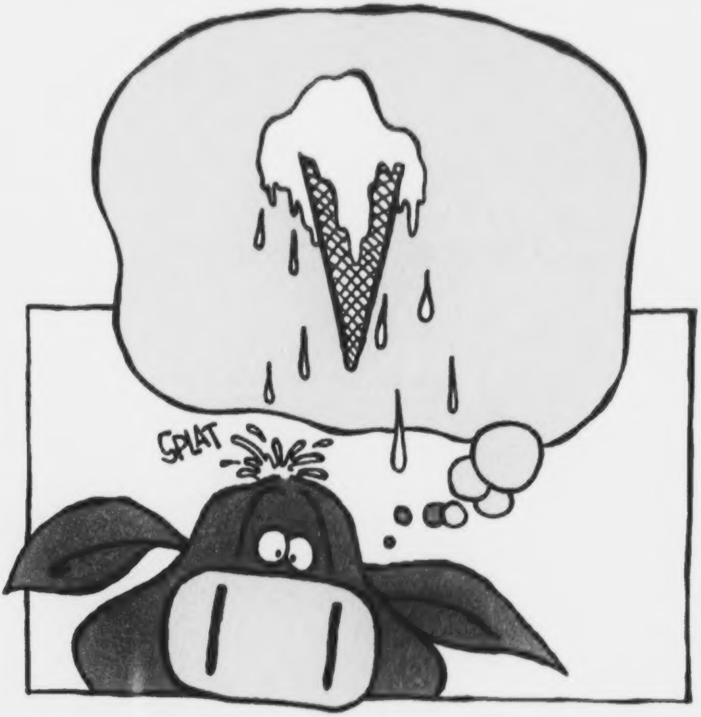
"What a hot day," said Pig. "I am hot from top to bottom. I am hot from bottom to top. Hot, hot, hot."

Donkey sighed. "You're supposed to concentrate on cool things. Ice cream. Snowballs. Wind. The moon."

"I can't," said Pig. "It's too hot." He turned right side up. "Anyway, the moon is not cool."

"Yes, it is," said Donkey. "Tonight there will be a big, round, white, peppermint moon. Whenever I think about a big, round, white, peppermint moon, I feel cool."

Pig tried to imagine a moon made of peppermint ice. But as he watched, the ice moon melted down to a sliver. He thought about splashy mud puddles. But the mud puddles dried up. He thought about pistachio ice cream—his favorite—but it melted. And he still felt hot.



"I have an idea," said Pig.

"Pig," said Donkey, "we have tried all your ideas. We've sat in all the shady spots. We've stood on our heads. What's left?"

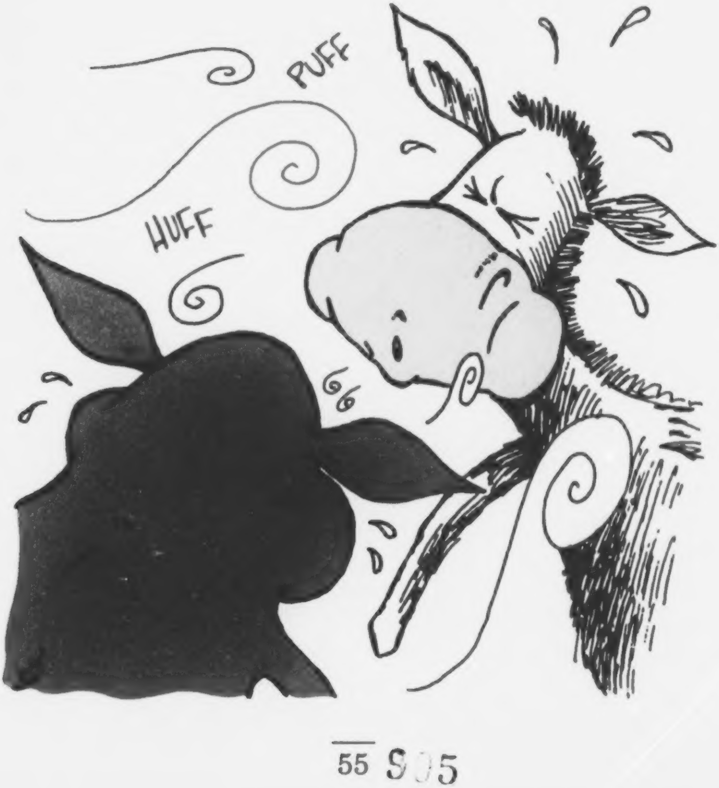
Pig said, "If I blow on you and you blow on me, we will both get cool."

"Maybe so," said Donkey.

They blew.

"Tell you what, Pig," said Donkey. "I am getting cool from being blown on, but I am also getting hot from blowing."

"Me too," said Pig crossly. "It seems that whatever I do to get cool makes me hotter instead. Just the opposite of what I want. I wonder . . ."

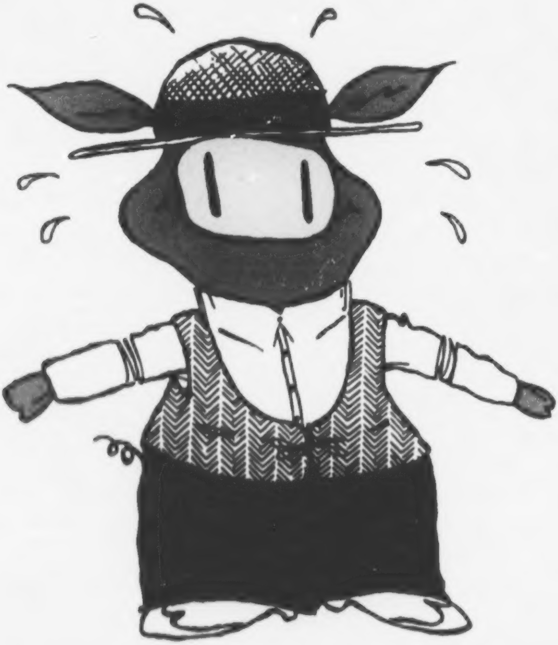


Suddenly he stood up.

“Now where are you going, Pig?” asked Donkey.”

“You'll see,” said Pig, heading into the barn. He rummaged around until he found what he wanted—a trunk full of old clothes.

A few minutes later Pig was ready. He stepped out into the sunshine.



“Oh, Pig,” said Donkey. “Now you will really be hot.”

“Not at all,” said Pig. “These are cool clothes. Watch how they make me cool.”

Pig marched around the barnyard three times. Sweat slid from his hat brim and dribbled down his face. The shirt collar scratched his neck.

Pig stopped marching. He took off the cool hat and threw it on the ground.

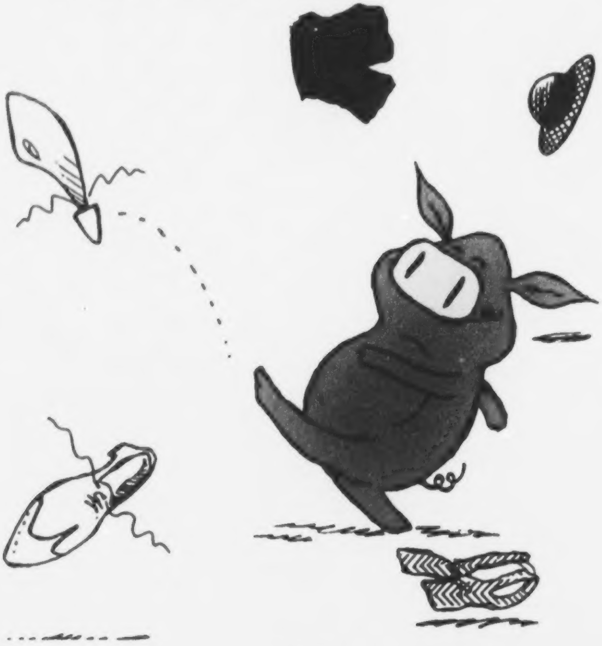
At once a delicious breeze licked the top of his head.

Pig wiggled out of the cool shirt, vest, and pants.

He felt cooler still.

He kicked off the cool shoes—one, two.

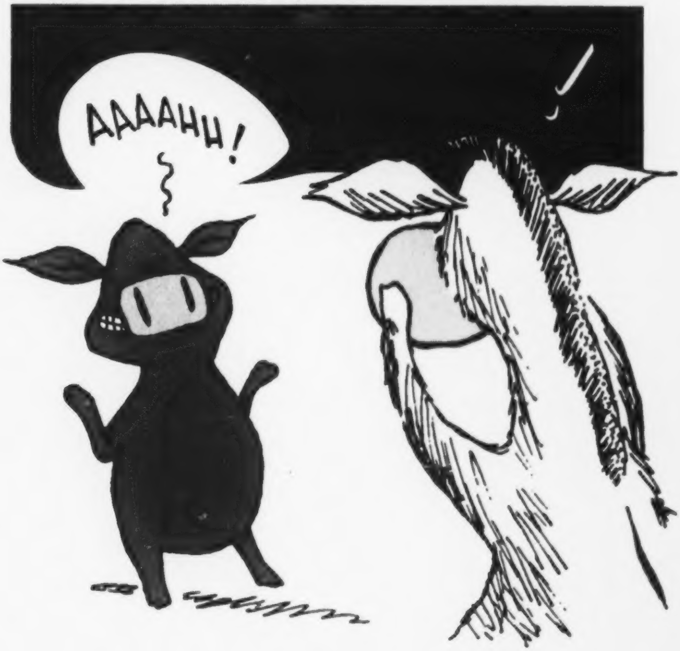
Pig felt quite wonderful.



"See?" said Pig. "Cool all over."

"Amazing!" said Donkey.

"Now I can concentrate," said Pig. "I am going to sit down here with you and concentrate on that nice, round moon you were talking about."



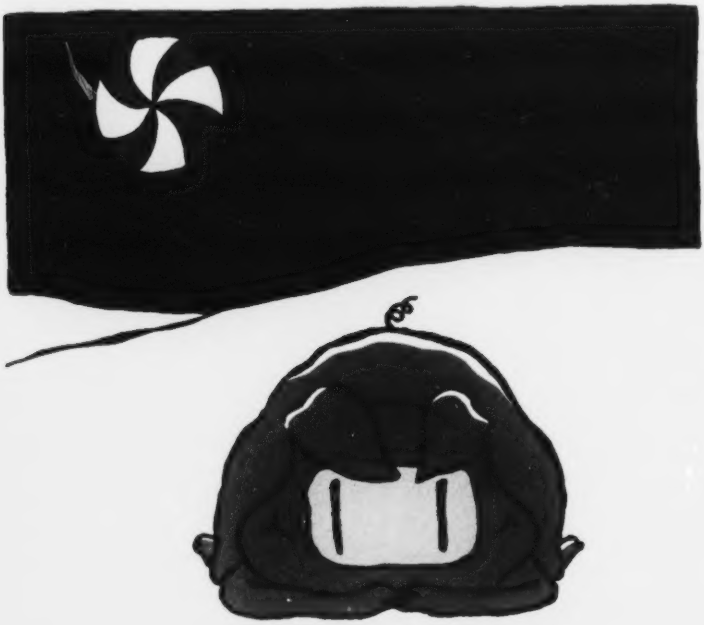
"Good idea," said Donkey.

They closed their eyes. In a little while the sun went down and the moon came up.

Pig opened one eye to look at it. "Say, Donkey," he whispered. "That concentration—I think I'm getting the hang of it now."

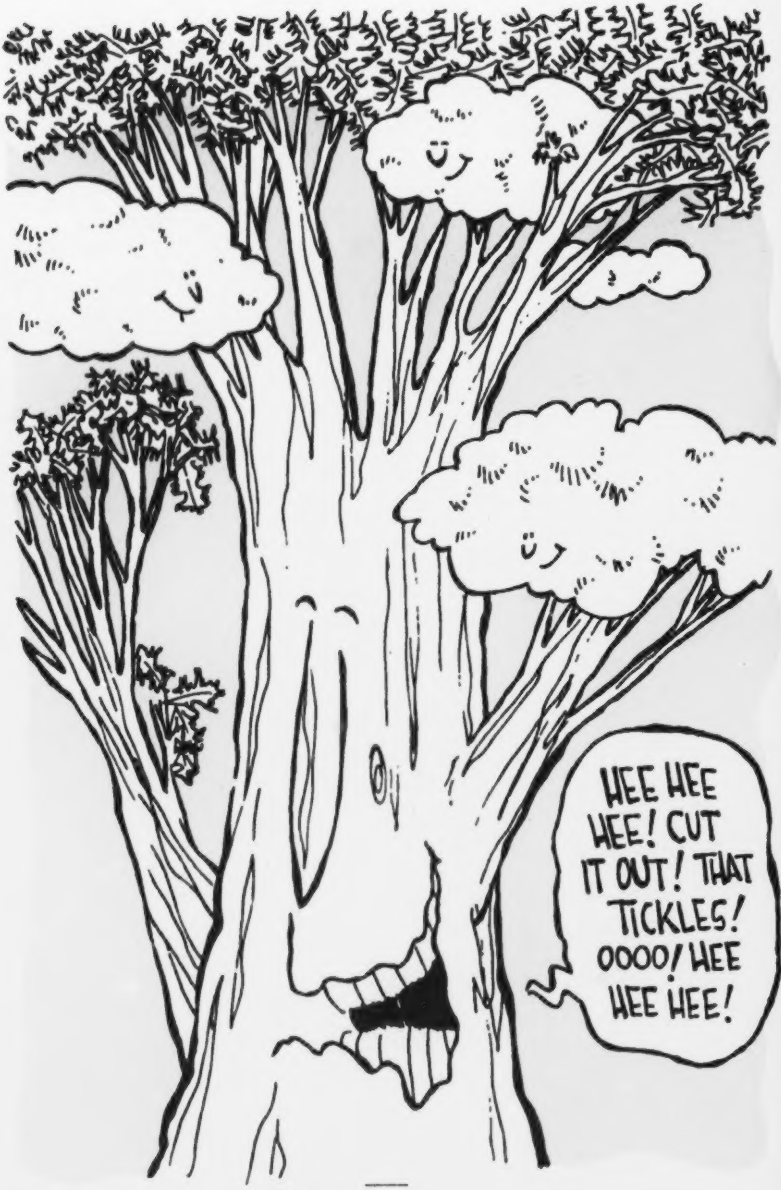
"You bet," Donkey whispered back.

Pig felt happy from bottom to top. He closed his eyes and went to sleep, the coolest pig under the peppermint moon.



Things to do *after* reading the story

Pig and Donkey concentrated on cool things in order to get their bodies to become cool. Have you ever concentrated on something to make it happen? Did it happen, or did you have to do something to make it happen? Talk about this experience.


HEE HEE HEE! CUT IT OUT! THAT TICKLES! OOOO! HEE HEE HEE!

Live Oak

by Marietta T. Storey

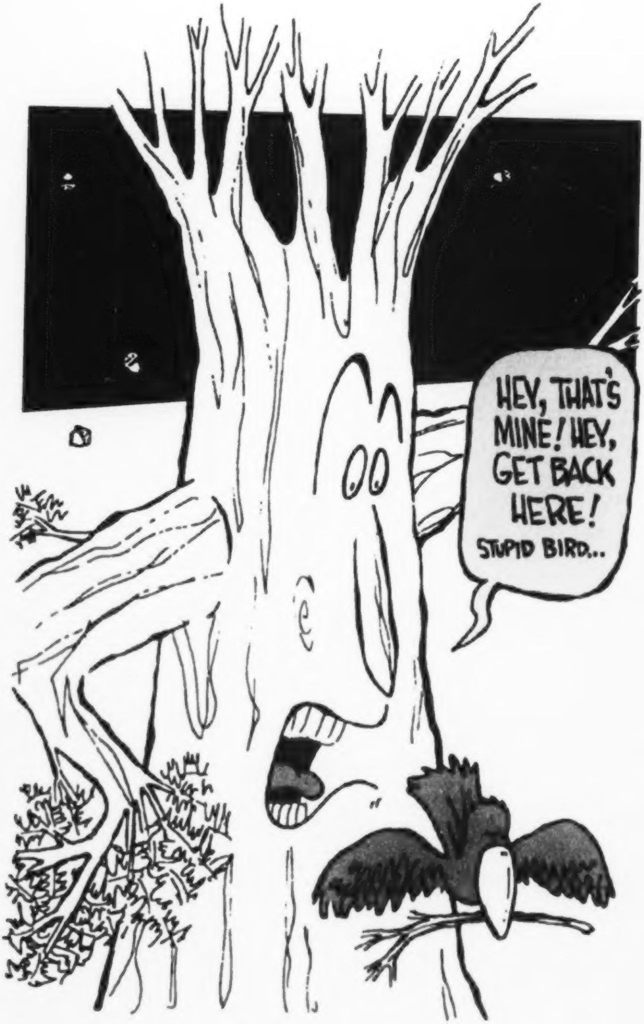
Things to do *before* reading the poem

Take a few minutes to go outside, if possible, and observe an oak tree. How can you tell if it is an oak tree? What do its leaves look like? What else grows on an oak tree besides leaves?

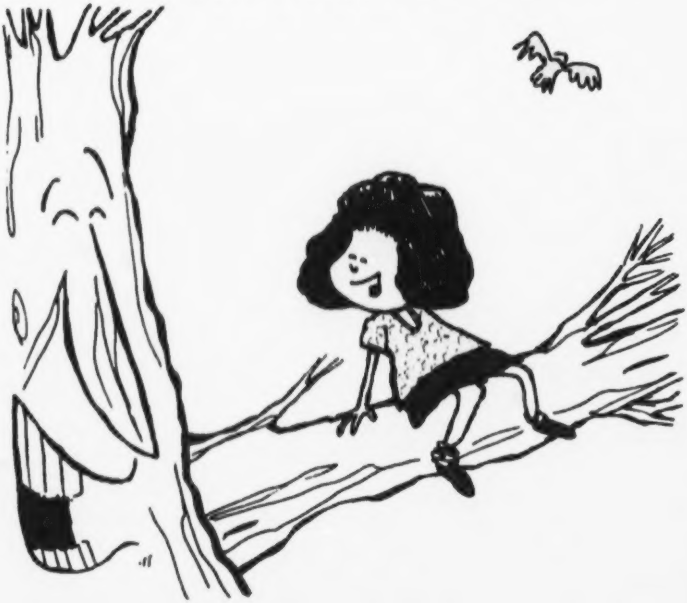
Oak tree, oak tree, way up high,
How does it feel to touch the sky?
Do floating clouds that brush your leaves
Tickle you, or make you sneeze?

Do nesting birds that steal your twigs,
Scratch your arms, or muss your wig?
And do your acorns, falling free,
Smash your toes, or bruise your knees?

911


HEY, THAT'S MINE! HEY, GET BACK HERE! STUPID BIRD...

Oak tree, oak tree, would you sigh,
If I should climb you, by and by?
Would you moan, and quiver angrily?
Or would you laugh, and grin—like me?



Things to do *after* reading the poem

Do you think trees can have feelings like you? Why or why not? If you could be a tree, what kind would you like to be? Why?

We hope you have had fun with these stories and poems!

Books of Special Interest to Parents

How Can I Prepare My Young Child for Reading? by Paula C. Grinnell. Presents ideas to assist parents in preparing their children for reading. Focuses on children from birth through kindergarten.

You Can Help Your Young Child with Writing, by Marcia Baghban. Suggests methods parents can use to help develop their children's writing at home. Offers writing and reading activities.

Beginning Literacy and Your Child, by Steven B. Silvern and Linda R. Silvern. Recommends ways parents can participate in the development of their children's literacy. Provides activities for talking, reading, writing, and listening.

Helping Your Child Become a Reader, by Nancy L. Roser. Provides suggestions for parents to help them encourage their children to read. Offers several practical activities for parents.

Creating Readers and Writers, by Susan Mandel Glazer. Suggests parents (1) encourage the use of language, (2) build positive attitudes toward reading, writing, and speaking, and (3) demonstrate the purposes of literacy. Includes book suggestions classified by age groups.

You Can Encourage Your High School Student to Read, by Jamie Myers. Offers practical ideas parents can use to encourage their teenagers to read more. Shows how reading can serve adolescents' needs and presents future needs that reading can fulfill.

Your Child's Vision Is Important, by Caroline Beverstock. Discusses how vision affects school work, how different eye problems affect vision, and how to spot vision problems. Includes suggestions for dealing with vision difficulties.

Encouraging Your Junior High Student to Read, by John L. Shefelbine. Discusses why reading for pleasure is important. Suggests how to find time for reading, gather a variety of reading materials, and help a child who has difficulty reading.

Cost per booklet is $1.75

Produced and distributed in cooperation with the
International Reading Association

101 Ideas to Help Your Child Learn to Read and Write

by Mary and Richard Behm

Offers 101 practical suggestions for parents to help their children develop reading and writing skills in the home environment. Ideas include bedtime activities, using television, travel, games, and many other ways to incorporate literacy into the home.

G08; $6.50

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Submissions Policy for Stories and Articles for Parents and Children Together

Stories for Children and Parents:

1. Make the story fun for children—your primary audience. The adult reading along will enjoy the story if the child does.
2. Make sure that your story is acceptable to parents. We do not want parents to reject the story because it is inappropriate for their children. Writing a story that is interesting to children and at the same time pleasing to parents is a big challenge.
3. Your story should be no longer than eight double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.
4. Correct grammar and syntax are important. For the most part, we choose to model correct standard English.
5. Be careful about the vocabulary you use in your story. Rule out really long and difficult-to-pronounce words.
6. Make your stories gender inclusive. Do not use sexist terminology or ideas. Our stories must be interesting to both boys and girls.
7. You may illustrate your own story, but the illustrations must be line drawings in pen and ink only. The drawings must be able to be scanned, so too much detail will not work.
8. Stories that have action and dialogue work well for the audio portion of the magazine.

Articles for Parents:

1. Articles should contain practical information and helpful strategies. Anecdotes and other experiences modeling useful learning methods are particularly desirable.
2. Your article should be no longer than four double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.

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"The Day It Rained Cats and Dogs"

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"Pig and the Peppermint Moon"

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Future Issues of *Parents and Children Together*

- *Making History Come Alive*
- *Art Education*
- *Expressing Yourself through Writing*
- *Speaking and Listening Skills*
- *Improving Your Child's Memory*
- *Collaborative Learning*
- *Developing Your Child's Vocabulary*

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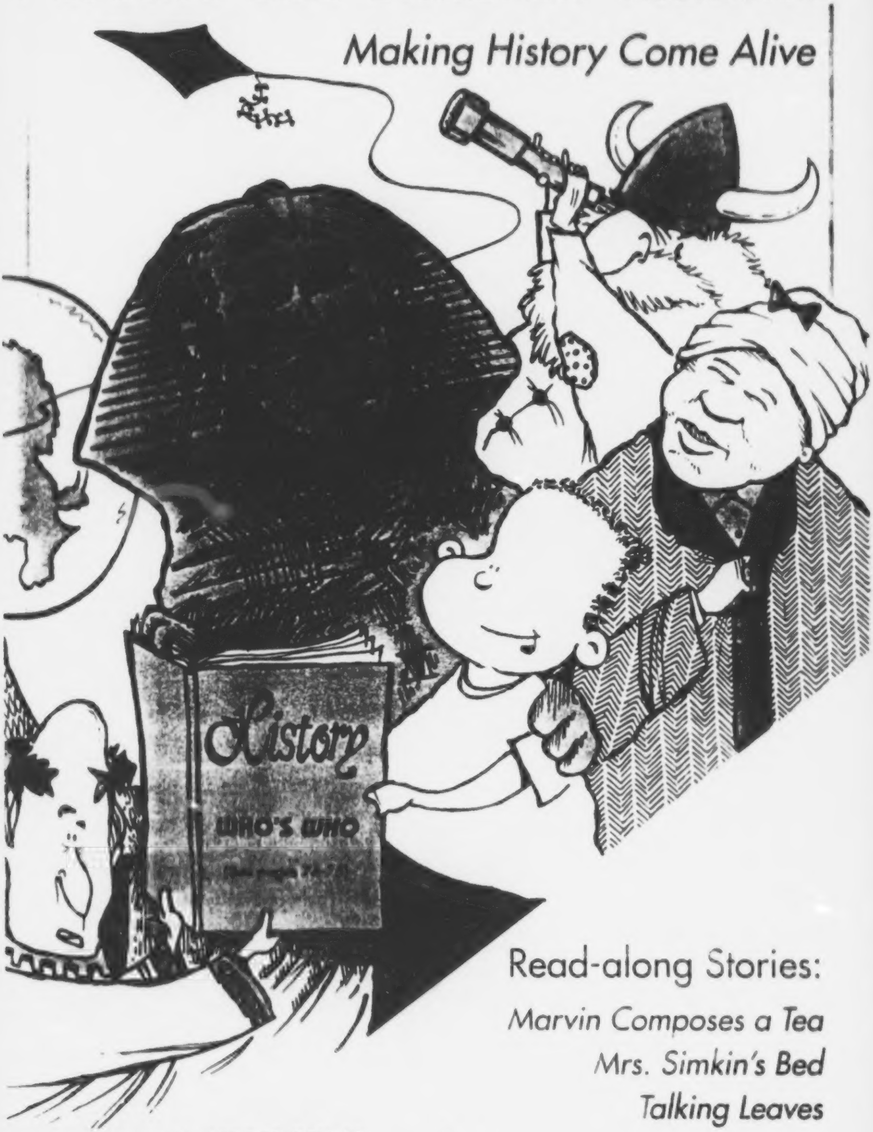
June 1992

Parents and Children Together

Making History Come Alive



Read-along Stories:

Marvin Composes a Tea
Mrs. Simkin's Bed
Talking Leaves

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This booklet has a companion audio tape on "Making History Come Alive." Occasionally there are directions on the tape that do not appear in the booklet or headings in the booklet that aren't spoken on the tape.

Knights and Children Together

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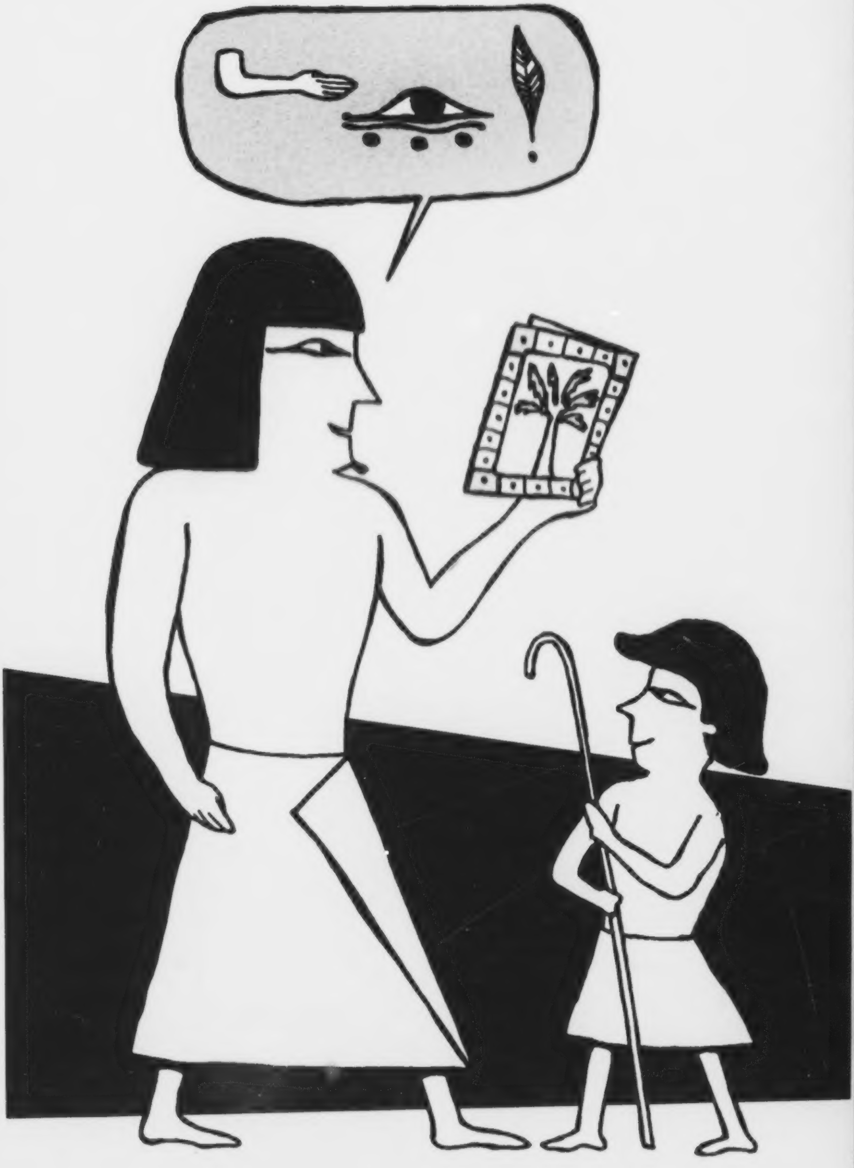


Getting Started

Welcome to this month's issue of *Parents and Children Together*. History means telling stories about the past that explain why people act the way they do. In this issue, we address ways that you can help your children develop a sense of personal, local, and national history. On side B of the tape (and in the second half of the booklet) we have three read-along stories. We encourage you to listen to these stories and to read them with your children, so that they may participate in the excitement of story reading. Of course, your children can also listen to the stories alone, if you wish.

The Past Is Last Week

When I was a boy, we used all kinds of jingles to remember important events in history—for instance: "In 1492 Columbus sailed the ocean blue" and "In 1865 Lincoln kept the Union alive."

Did you do things like that, too? Most of us use little tricks like that to help us remember important dates and events.

Though the approach to teaching history has changed since I was in elementary school, today's children still study major events in American history because they represent American culture. Columbus and other explorers, the Pilgrims, the Revolutionary War, the war between the North and the South, the abolition of slavery, and the Great Depression of the 1930s all had a significant impact on American life, as did many other events. Knowing about those moments in American history, then, gives children a sense of participation in the drama of the United States of America. This knowledge also connects them with the adults of the community. They have a common knowledge about their country.

But history is more than a simple record of past activities. History is an interpretation of those events and the people who participated in them. It is an attempt to explain why problems occurred and why people reacted to them as they did. For instance, why did we fight the Revolutionary War with Great Britain? And why did some colonists remain faithful to Britain while their neighbors fought against them? The answer to those questions calls for an interpretation of events, not simply a knowledge that the war happened. You can help your children with the study of history by showing them the difference between knowing the facts and constructing a story that interprets the facts.

History as Exploration

The word "history" comes from a Greek word meaning "inquiry" or exploring ideas. That emphasizes the notion that history means telling a story about the past that tries to explain why people act the way they do.

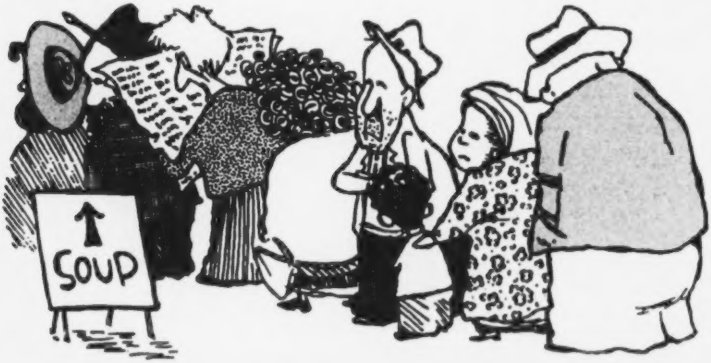
Why did the Pilgrims come to America? They came here so they could practice their religion without interference.

PLYMOUTH
ROCK
"LAST REST AREA
FOR 2000 MILES"

Why did we revolt against Great Britain? We did not want to be taxed without having elected representatives involved in the process.

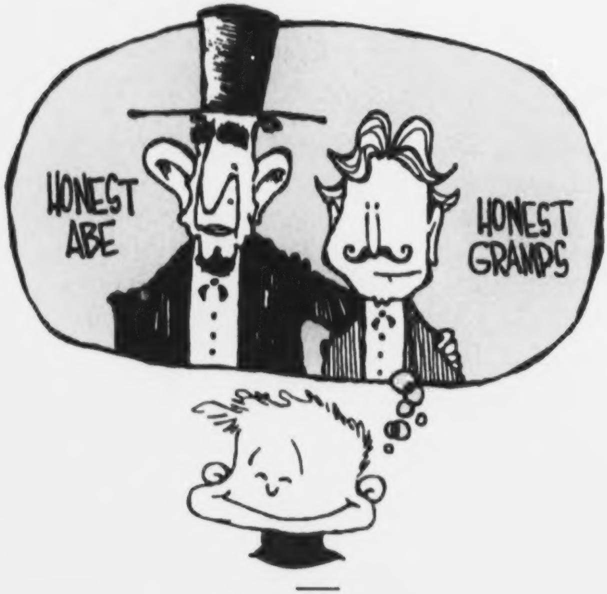
Why did we fight a civil war? The North wanted a strong federal government, and the South wanted to protect the self-determination of individual states, especially where slavery was concerned.

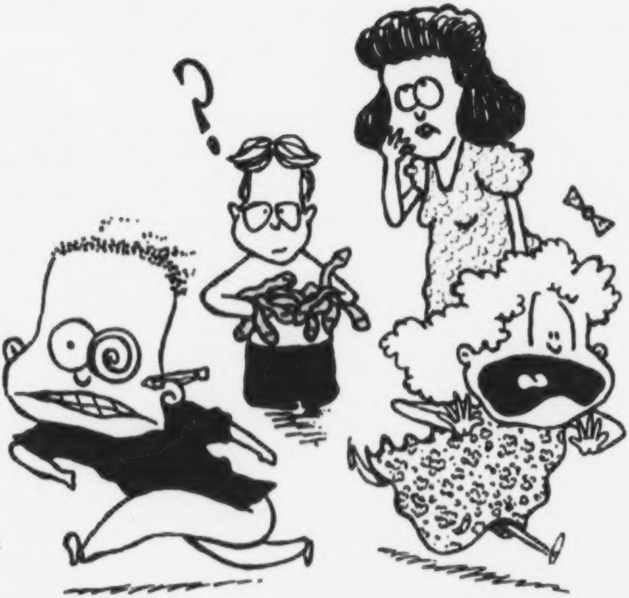
How did the Great Depression of the 1930s change the United States? It made the federal government responsible for the social welfare of all its citizens.



With those four questions we have touched one major event in each of the past four centuries. The answers are my interpretations, but they are fairly common answers, so I guess they are safe ones. Having safe answers, however, doesn't do justice to the process of creating a story that you as an individual can understand. That's why many teachers now get their young students to read library books about people who lived through the events. They want to help children gain a concrete sense of what happened, rather than simply listing names and dates for which children have no feeling.

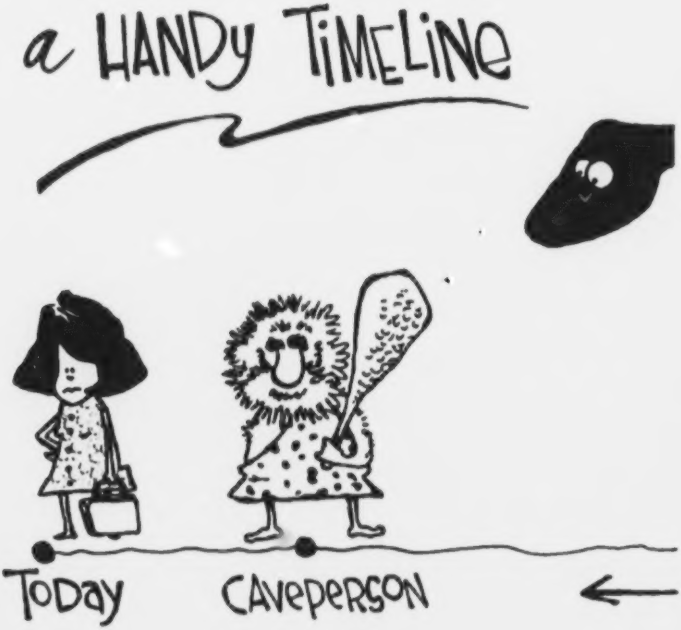
As adults, we each have a sense of past time. Our minds have developed to the point that we can comprehend changes that occurred over the centuries. Young children, on the other hand, have very little sense of the past. For all they know, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt, and their own grandfather all lived about the same time. One researcher estimates that a first-grade child can hold one week in mind as her sense of the past. A sixth grader may be able to hold one year in mind for a sense of the past. That's because they can only relate the past to their own experience. Their minds haven't developed enough for them to lift themselves above their own experience to envision the development of people and nations one century ago or three thousand years ago.



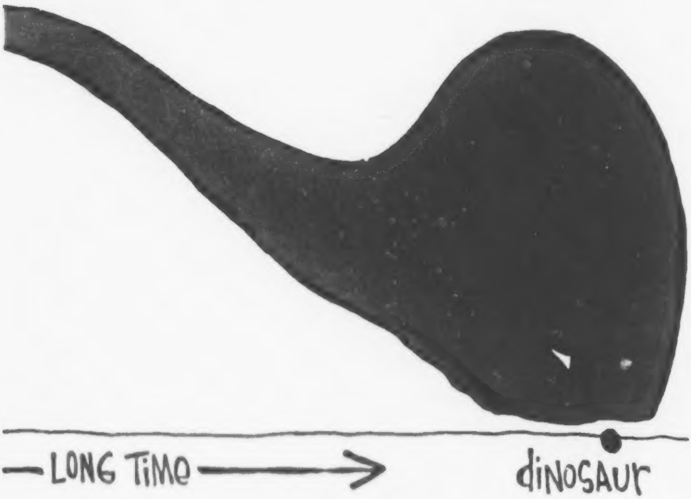


When one of my daughters was young, she frequently asked me to tell her about the olden days. What she meant was tales from her father's childhood where he pitched hay, climbed trees to hide, and brought baby snakes to school to make everyone squeal. In my daughter's mind, I am sure that my childhood was all part of a world where dragons roamed the countryside and Indians danced in anger over the white man who invaded his hunting grounds. But that's all right. Young children need stories to give them a sense of a life and a time different from their own. Gradually, they will begin to sort out the sequence of past events.

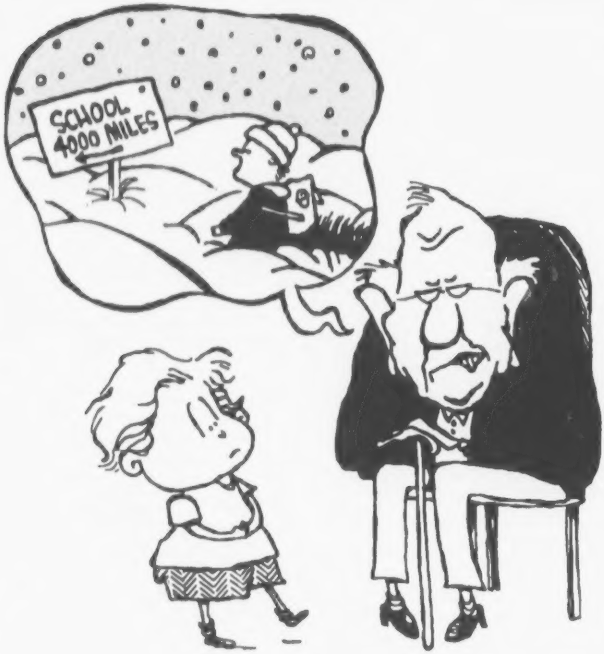
My six-year-old nephew once asked my wife if there were dinosaurs when she was born. Naturally, I won't let my wife forget that question. In reply, however, we took one of his toy dinosaurs and placed it in one corner of the room. In the middle of the room we placed a picture of a naked bushman from the National Geographic magazine. In the opposite corner of the room we stood my wife. With that visual representation we tried to show my nephew that there was a huge amount of time between my wife, early man, and the dinosaur. And he concluded with the statement: "Oh, so there weren't dinosaurs even when Grandpa was born." He was on the right track.

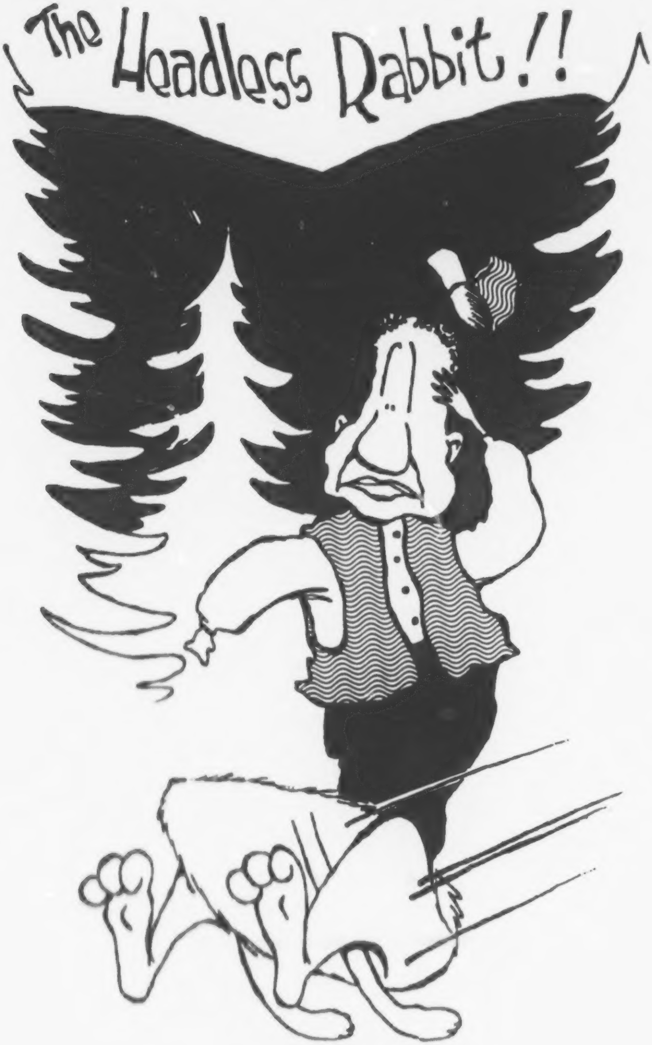


You can do similar demonstrations with major historical events if they come up for discussion in your house. Those demonstrations won't give your child an immediate understanding of history, but they lay the groundwork for his mind to begin to separate events into historical sequence. These examples of my daughter and my nephew should reinforce the notion that concrete stories and activities about historical personalities and events are an important first step toward making them seem real. Across the years, your child will learn to sequence these events as it becomes necessary for him or her to formulate a comprehensible story, especially in school.



If you want to help your child develop a sense of history, probably the place to start is your own family. Why not have your child ask grandparents or older relatives for their favorite stories from the past? One second-grade teacher in Louisiana had her students learn a little about their family's history by having the older people in the family dictate stories to these second graders. Some came back with stories about their parents; some about grandparents; some about great-grandparents. Here are samples of the stories these seven-year-olds brought back to read to their classmates:




The Headless Rabbit !!

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Once upon a time, in the mountains of Alabama, my great-grandfather was going to visit a sick friend. There were no roads or cars, so he was walking on a trail across the mountain. It was beginning to get dark when he saw a figure coming toward him. Since he was a hunter and not afraid of things in the woods, he decided to wait on the trail for the approaching creature. It looked like a white rabbit, but as it brushed past his leg he realized the rabbit had no head or tail. He turned and watched as the rabbit hopped out of sight.

When Great-Grandfather got to his friend's house, he learned his friend had passed away about the same time he had seen the rabbit on the trail. He wondered if the two events were related.

You may find this story hard to believe, but my great-grandfather wasn't a drinking man and always told the truth.

He lived to be 72 years old and said this was the only thing he ever saw that he couldn't explain.

(This story was told to me by my grandmother about her father and occurred about 1910 in Scottsboro, Alabama.)

Tongue Twister

Once upon a time, when my father was a boy, he lived in South Dakota.

One winter day, my father and my uncle were outside in the freezing cold. My father said to my uncle, “Let’s put our tongues on the car bumper and lick off the frost.”

“Good idea!” said my uncle.

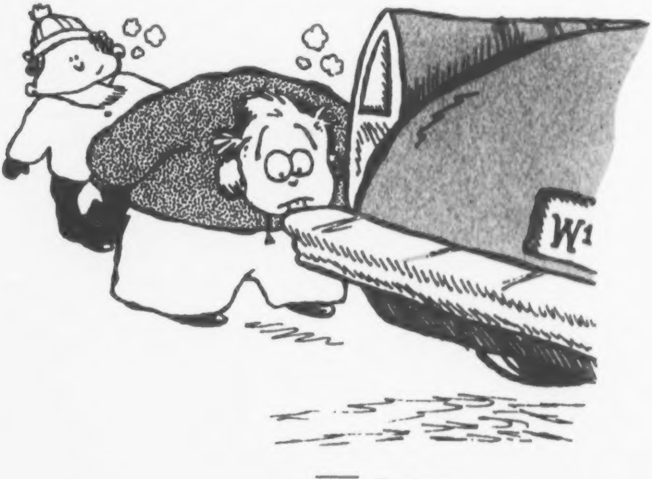
“You go first,” said my dad.

So, my uncle touched his tongue to the cold, frosty bumper, and it stuck.

My uncle couldn’t get his tongue off. He said, “AAAHHHGGG!”

My dad said, “What’s the matter, brother?”

“AAAHHHGGG!” said my uncle again, still stuck to the bumper.



"I better get help," my dad said. He ran into the house to his father. "Dad, Dad, Dick is stuck to the car! Come quick!"

"What?"

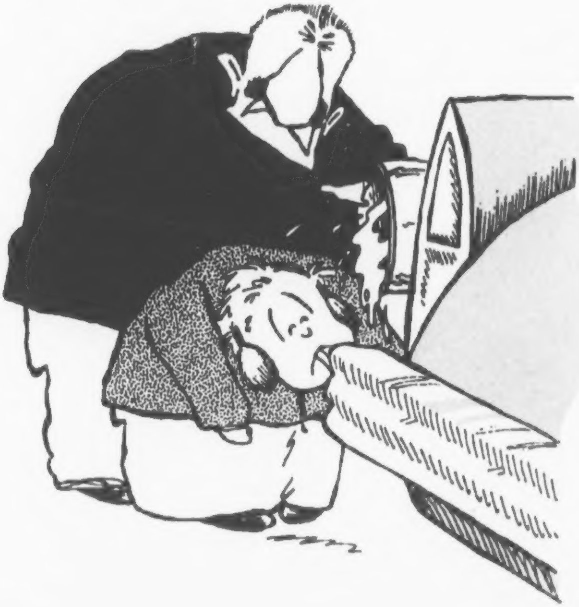
"Come quick and see."

They rushed outside and found my uncle on his knees, his tongue stuck to the bumper.

"What are you doing?" his father shouted.

"AAAHHHGGG!" said my uncle.

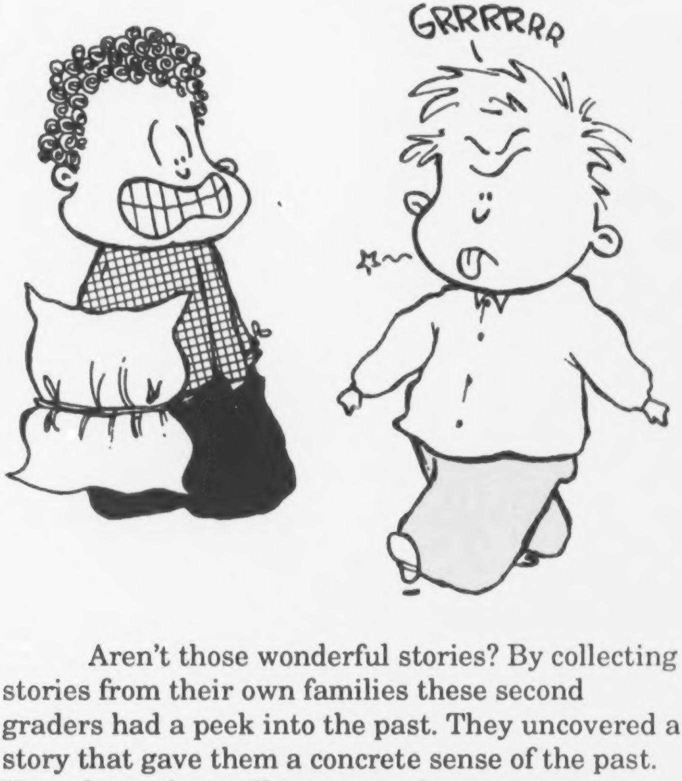
Then his father got a pan of warm water and poured it on my uncle's tongue. Slowly my uncle's tongue peeled off the bumper.



"Are you crazy?" said his father.

My uncle pointed his finger at my dad and said, "He made me do it!"

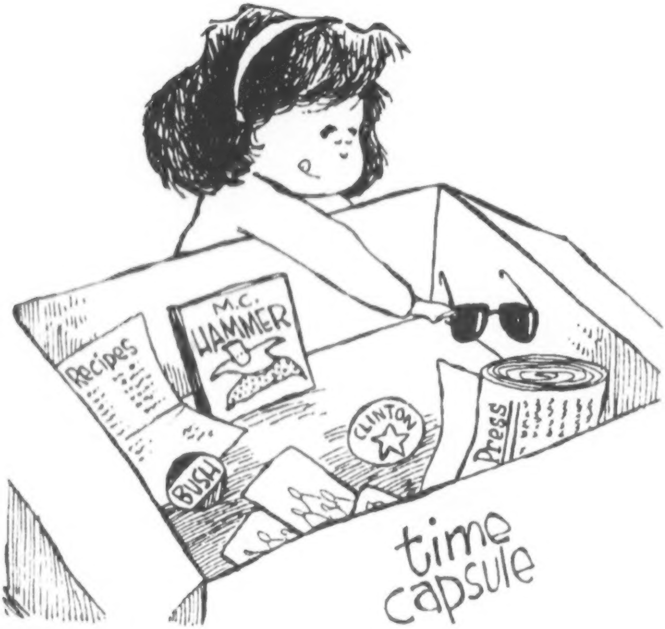
For several days afterwards, my uncle and my dad were sore in different places.



Aren't those wonderful stories? By collecting stories from their own families these second graders had a peek into the past. They uncovered a story that gave them a concrete sense of the past. Years later they will interpret those stories differently because they will understand more clearly the times in which they occurred—in other words, they will have a clearer sense of history.

What Parents Can Do

There are several other specific activities parents can do with their children to help them understand history better. Here are a few of them.



Family Artifacts

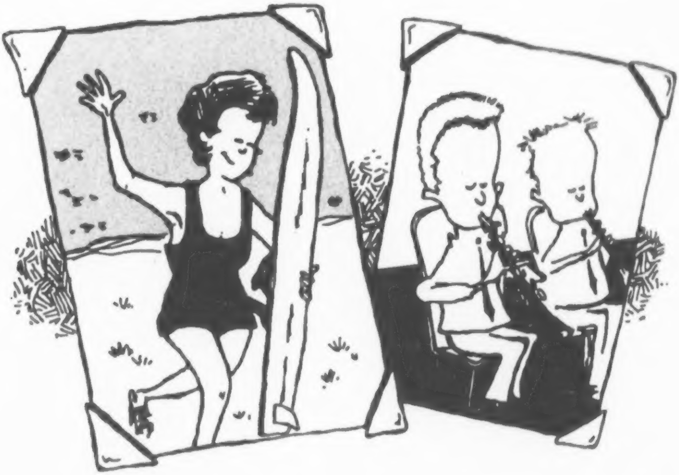
- Think of a list of items to put in a time capsule to be opened a thousand years from now. First, compile a list of some things that your family owns, including items from each room in the house. Then, select those items that would provide the most information about your family and would be of interest to people in the distant future.

Family Tree

- Help children start their own family tree. If the family already has a genealogical tree, it can be used to help make and design their own. The tree might include pictures of each family member and give information such as birth date, death date, or nickname.

Photo Album

- Get out old photo albums that show pictures of family members who are a part of the children's past but who died before they were born. Also, show children pictures of themselves and their parents when they were young.



Share Books

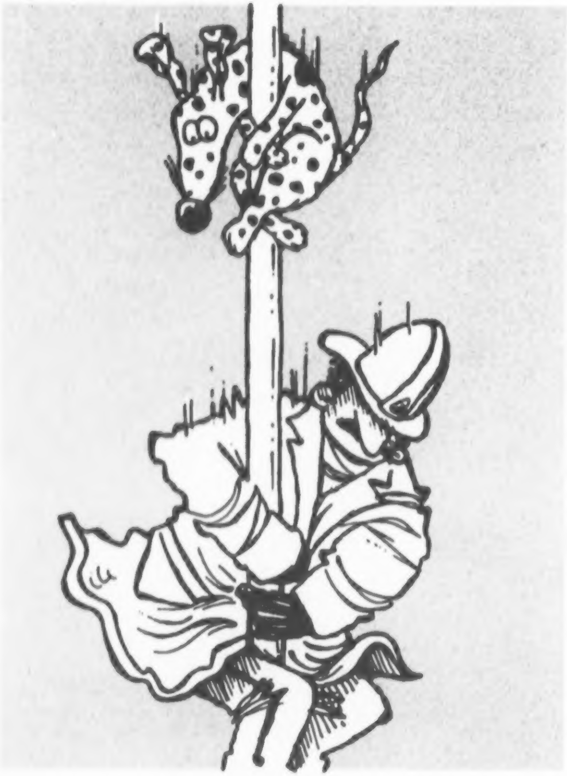
- Read stories with settings that take place during various times in history. These might be historical fiction novels or biographies of famous people who lived in the past. Talk about how these peoples' lives were different from our own and what the advantages and disadvantages would be of living in those times.

Songs

- Teach your children songs or chants that tell about life in the past. Children will learn that many songs were written to tell about the feelings of the people of specific times. Songs that parents learned when they were little, folk songs, work songs, songs about particular events, and nursery rhymes can all provide information about how people lived in the past. For example, there is an interesting history behind such songs as "Yankee Doodle Dandy" and "Star Spangled Banner," songs that grew out of slavery like "Go Down, Moses," and nursery rhymes like "Rub-a-Dub-Dub" or "Sing a Song of Sixpence."

Community Helpers

- Visit a police station or fire station and talk to the women and men who work there about their jobs. Look at their equipment, and talk about how the equipment and the job have changed over their work lives. Then, visit a library and check out books that explain how police or fire stations operated in the past. Talk about how these jobs have changed over the years and about the advantages of modern equipment.



School Yearbook

- Have your children start a yearbook that includes pictures of them each year and tells their height, weight, classes they liked, special awards they received, and special activities in which they were involved. This book can be looked at to see how they have changed physically, socially, and mentally over time. Later, after they are grown up, this yearbook will be a source of memories and enjoyment.

Folk Medicine

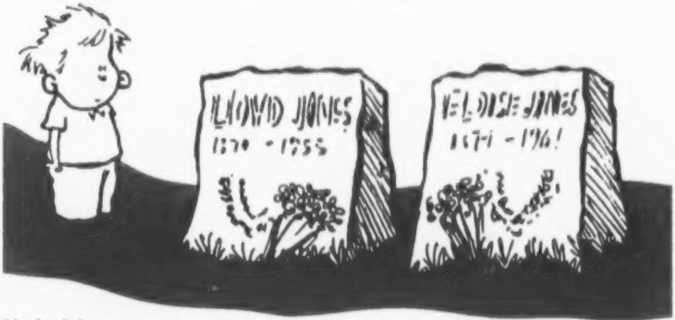
- To help children understand how the medical world has changed, talk about folk medicine. Tell them about some remedies that their grandparents used to cure sickness. Check out a book from the library about folk medicine, or about cures used by early pioneers to cure illnesses or heal injury. For example, here are a few silly ones: to cure a sore throat, some pioneers tied the right front foot of a mole around their neck with a black thread.

YOU'D THINK A COUGH DROP WOULD BE GOOD ENOUGH.. BUT NOOOOOO!...

If they had a sty in their eye, they would run the tip of a black cat's tail over it. For a toothache, they rubbed their gums with rattlesnake rattles or the brain of a rabbit. For headaches, they rubbed onions on their brows. There is also a lot of common sense and wisdom in folk medicine. It can be cheaper than modern medicine, too. Have your children ask older people in the family or among your friends about effective home remedies they have known or used.

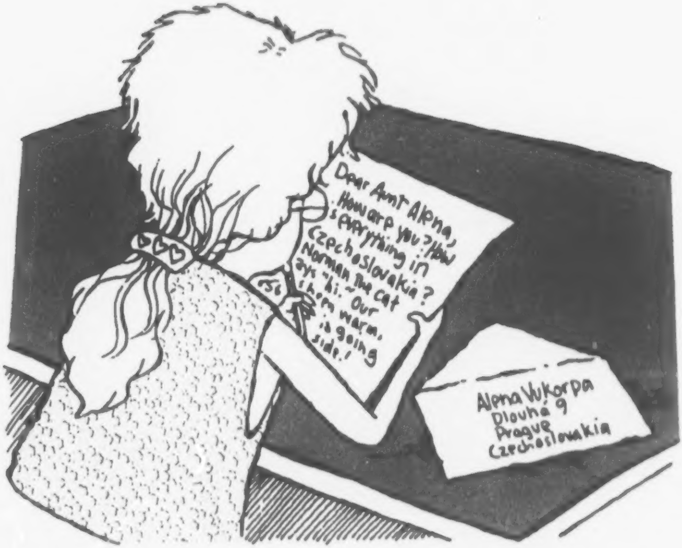
Visit A Cemetery

- Visit cemeteries where your ancestors are buried. Read the epitaphs on the tombstones and reconstruct the family relationships of those buried together.



Visit Museums

- Take your children to historical, art, or children's museums. Museums that have people dressed in clothing of a particular period, carrying out everyday tasks such as carpentry, shoemaking, and cooking, are a wonderful way for children to experience different periods in time.

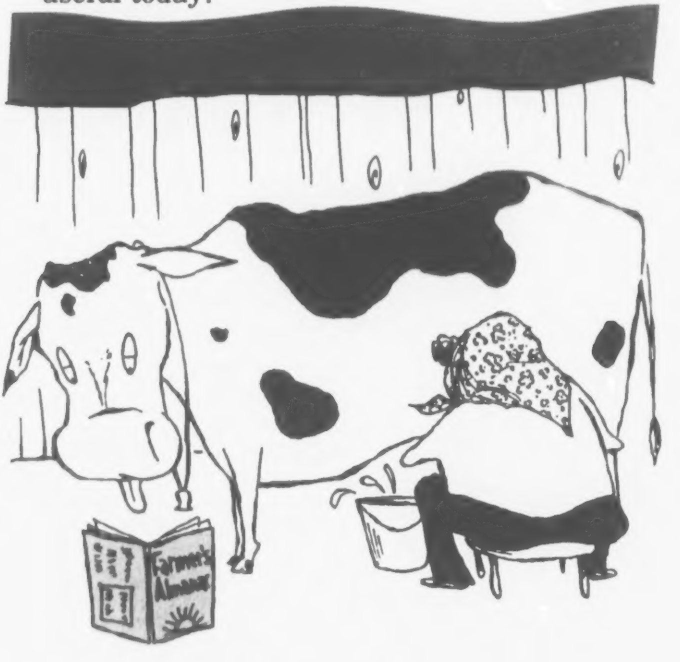

Dear Aunt Alena,
How are you? How
is everything in
Czechoslovakia?
Norman the cat
ays "hi." Our
them warm.
is going
side.!
Alena Vukorpa
Dlouhá 9
Prague
Czechoslovakia

Family History Project

❖ Most children have questions about who they are. They like to know about their roots, their personal backgrounds. One way to discover why they behave in certain ways and not in others, or why they believe in certain things and not in others, is to examine their family's past. Attitudes and belief systems were developed in some family context. Interviews with relatives (grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and others) are a way to find out about the family's past. If they live far away, either call or write them to get the information. How far back do the stories in your family go?

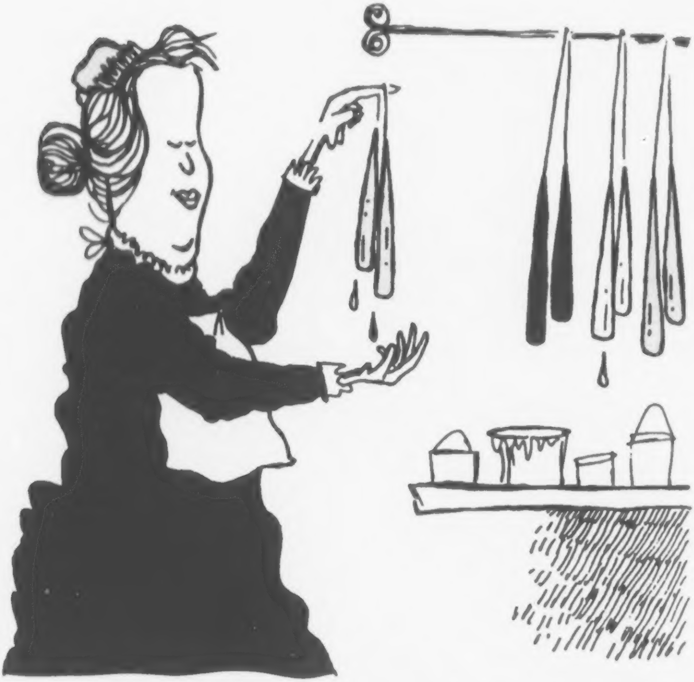
Almanac

- Buy or check out from the library a copy of the Farmer's Almanac. This publication has been produced continuously since 1792, and is full of history. The recipes, predictions, and information have been used by Americans for nearly 200 years. Look at the book together and find out what types of information it provides. Talk about how this publication might have been used in the 1790s. Why would it have been useful to people living on farms in isolated areas of the country? Why would this book be useful today?



Crafts

- Crafts in colonial times were much different from ours today. In many instances, the materials used to make these crafts were different as well. Check out books from the library on pioneer or colonial crafts and try making some of them together. These crafts might include such things as candle making or making children's toys.



With these ideas, you can help make history come alive for your children.

Helping Danny Become a Good Reader

Jim McGlinn is a reading teacher at the University of North Carolina at Asheville.

I walked into Danny's bedroom one evening last year and found him playing with his Lego building blocks.

"Hi, Dan. What are you building?"

"This car, Dad."

"Hmmm. That's neat. Looks like you've got it about finished."

"Yeh. This one is easy."

"Say, Dan, did you do any reading on your book today?"

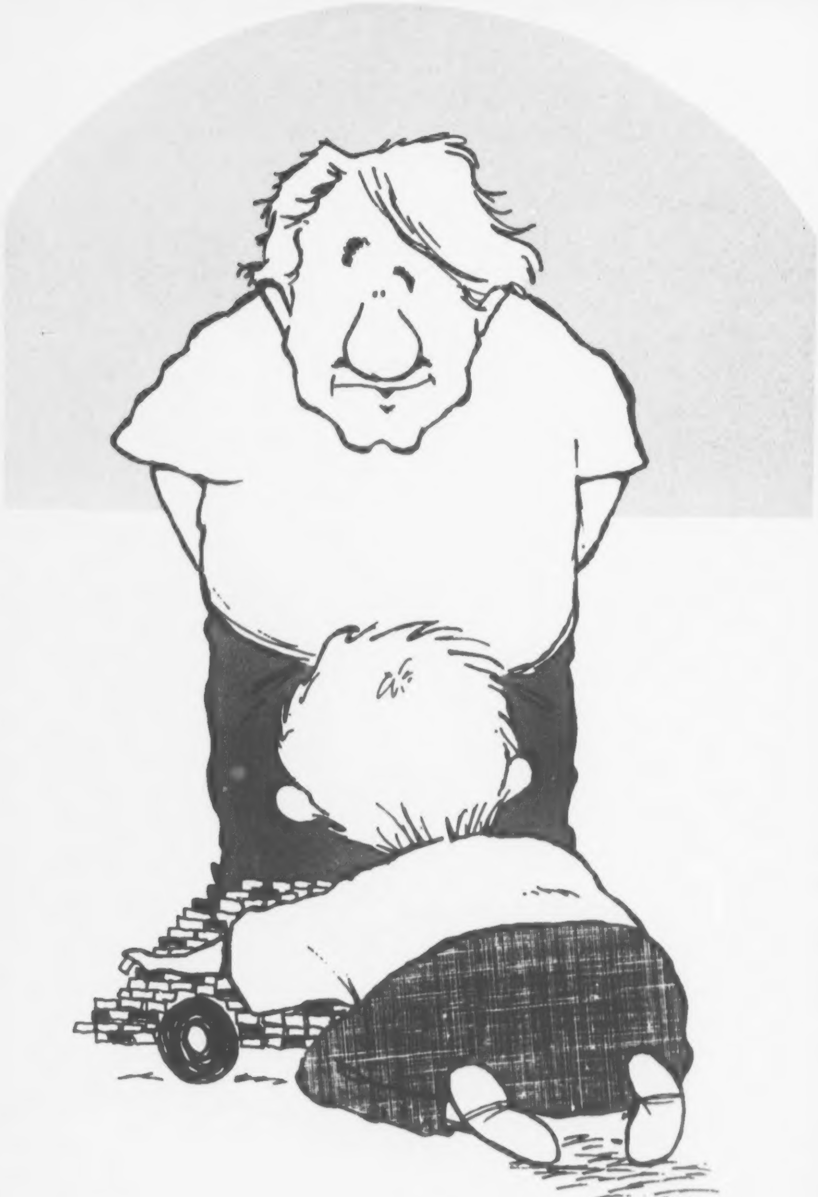
"Just a little during reading time at school, Dad."

"But you didn't read any tonight?"

"No, I like the book, but I don't like to read."

"Why not, Danny?"

"I just don't like to."



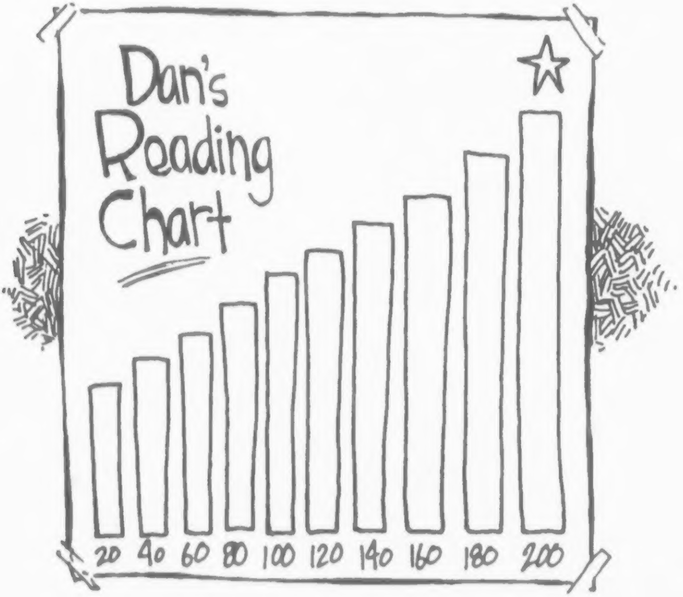
After this conversation, I decided to get involved more with Danny's reading. He was near the end of second grade and knew how to read, but he was a slow reader. When he read out loud, he kept stopping to sound out words that I thought he should know by sight — words such as "about," "their," and "friend." I knew that when Danny got into third grade, he would no longer just be reading during "reading time" at school. Instead he would get textbooks in history and science and health. He would be expected to read these books in addition to his reading books. So it was clear that Danny would have to make an important transition in his reading. He would have to go from a slow reader who was "learning to read" to a capable reader who was "reading to learn."

That's how Dan's home reading program began. The goals of this program were to get him to read a lot of books and to enjoy reading, and to choose to read sometimes instead of play with his Legos or Nintendo. Just as by playing a lot of Nintendo Danny became good at electronic games, by reading a lot he would become good at reading. And I hoped that if he read good books that were interesting to him — books with humor, adventure, excitement — then he would discover that reading was fun, even as much fun as "Super Mario Brothers III."

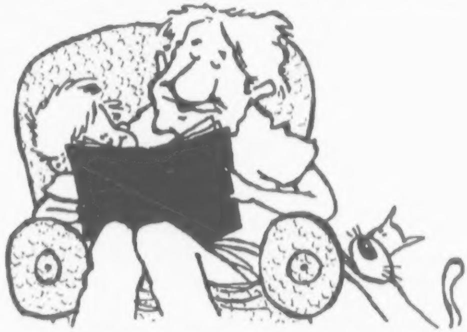
GOLD Treasure
RAIDER JONES
: the

The plan was simple. All I had to do was find a lot of good books that were easy for Dan to read and then get him to read them. The first step took a little time, but it was worth it. We went to the city library together. Dan found about 10 books that he thought he would like. Then I sat down with him and had him read to me a page or so from each book. This quickly showed us which books would be too hard or take too long to read. I was aiming for quick success in starting out this program. I wanted to build up Dan's confidence and his enjoyment. We ended up choosing three great "starter" books: *Frog and Toad Are Friends* by Arnold Lobel, *Danny and the Dinosaur* by Syd Hoff, and *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Suess.

The next step in our program was to get Danny started reading. I didn't want to force him to read and make reading a chore. Instead I wanted to let him make the choice to read. To make the choice easier, I used "read alongs" and rewards. That night, after dinner, we began. I set up short-term reading goals for Dan of 50 pages. When he reached each 50-page goal, he would get a dollar to save or to spend on the toy of his choice. Danny quickly figured that he would need to read only 200 pages to have enough money to buy a Lego rocket kit. I set up a chart to record Dan's daily progress. We drew a bar graph, numbered from zero to 200 in 20-page increments.



Next, to get Dan started, we began our "read alongs." This consisted of Danny and me, together, reading out loud. As I read I pointed to each word, and Danny, sitting in my lap, read along with me. I went slowly at first, at Danny's speed. Sometimes I would read very softly so Danny's voice was louder.



Sometimes I read a little faster so that Danny would learn to speed up a bit. When we came to a word that Danny didn't know, I just read right on as before. Dan would see the word as we were reading and he would hear me say the word, and he would say the word after me in his effort to read along. This was a good way to get Dan into the story and expose him to lots of hard words. The more Danny saw a word, the more able he was to recognize it the next time. That first evening, we read together the first two stories in *Frog and Toad are Friends.* We took a crayon and colored in a chunk of the chart to show those first 27 pages. We wrote down the date and the number of pages. Danny saw his progress in reading. And so did I. We both realized that he would be getting his first dollar very quickly.

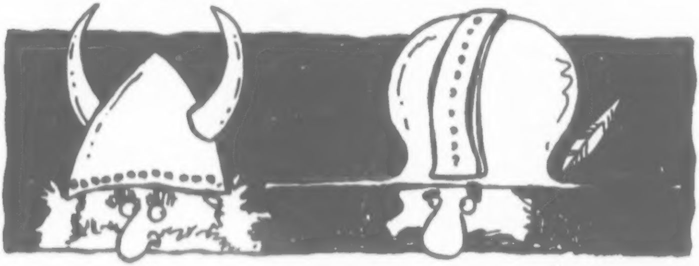
The next night Dan read on his own. He finished *Frog and Toad* and began *Danny and the Dinosaur.* I watched as he filled in his chart up to the 70-page mark, and I paid him his dollar as promised. And that's how it went. We continued during the next month the process of checking out books and reading—sometimes in "read alongs" and sometimes alone. Danny kept track of his progress. He seemed to enjoy watching the number of pages grow on the chart almost as much as he enjoyed receiving his reward money.

In this way, Danny started becoming a good reader. He started to read a lot of books, like *Cam Jansen and the Mystery of the Dinosaur Bones* by David Adler and *The Littles Go Exploring* by John Peterson. He began checking out more advanced books with chapters and fewer pictures. The pages began to have more words on them, so it took Danny longer to reach his 50-page goals, but Danny wasn't just after the money. He enjoyed knowing he could read "hard" books, and besides, the stories were more interesting. He began taking his books to school and reading them at reading time. And every night, almost without fail, he would get some reading done. I knew that Danny had arrived when early in the third grade he brought home from the school library *The Trumpet of the Swan* by E. B. White. During our "read along" I soon quieted and listened as Danny read confidently and smoothly about the swan who, with the love of a young boy, learned to trumpet. Like the swan, Danny had learned to be successful in his world.

Activities for Fun and Learning

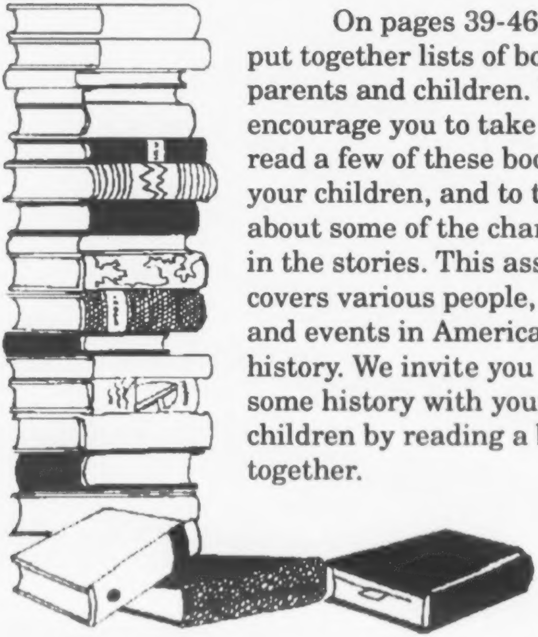
History often seems abstract to children because they cannot experience it in a tangible way. Try some of the following activities with your children to make history come alive for them.

- Use family photographs to show your children what their ancestors' lives were like. This will help them better understand their origins and their world as it has evolved.
- Read about the hypothetical and historical discoveries of America by sharing *The Discovery of the Americas,* by Betsy and Giulio Maestro (Lothrop Lee & Shepard Books). This book describes ventures of Stone Age hunters, the Phoenicians, the Vikings, Columbus, Cabot, and Magellan. After reading the book, help your children make a time line so they can see the chronological order of these events.



- Cook up some edible history with your kids. Share *Little House on the Prairie,* by Laura Ingalls Wilder or *Little Women,* by Louisa May Alcott. Then use *The Little House Cookbook* or *The Louisa May Alcott Cookbook* to prepare some of the recipes you read about in one of the stories. You can discuss ingredients, cooking methods and equipment, customs, clothing, and architecture, and relate them to the time period of the story.
- Help your child learn about a particular time in the past. Together, select and investigate a year. Look for books, photographs, clothes, records, TV programs, cars, and other signs of that time to observe what it was like "back then."

Books for Parents and Children



On pages 39-46 we have put together lists of books for parents and children. We encourage you to take time to read a few of these books with your children, and to talk about some of the characters in the stories. This assortment covers various people, places, and events in American history. We invite you to share some history with your children by reading a book together.

At the beginning of this issue, we mentioned that side B of the audio tape contains read-along stories. You may want to take some time to look ahead at these stories before you read along with your child. It is also important to talk about them ahead of time.

Before reading the story, talk about the title or things that might happen in the story. Then, after the story is finished, talk about it again. By the way, if in the middle of the story something funny or exciting happens, it's O.K. for you to stop the tape and discuss the event, or for you to ask your child questions such as "What is your favorite instrument?" or "Would you enjoy having a pet pig?" and then follow it up with a why or why not. These questions make your conversation about the story more meaningful and more valuable.

When you and your child are ready, turn the tape to side B and listen to the stories as you read along together, or you may read the stories aloud while your child reads along in the booklet.

Books for Parents

Eyeopeners! How to Choose and Use Children's Books about Real People, Places, and Things, by Beverly Kobrin (Penguin Books). A guide to over 500 nonfiction books. An easy-to-use index aids in location of books about history. Also includes tips for book selection, book-based activities, and ideas to nurture reading.

The Wild Shores: America's Beginnings, by Tee Loftin Snell. Elaborates on America's early exploration and colonization. Artwork of the time, maps, paintings, and photographs support the text. This book covers the years 1492 through 1841.

Chronicle of America, Clifton Daniel, editorial director. Presents history as news by using a newspaper-style format. Divides history into eight segments: 1) A New World, B.C.-1606, 2) Conceived in Liberty, 1607-1763, 3) Harvest of Freedom, 1764-1788, 4) A Perfect Union? 1789-1849, 5) A House Divided, 1850-1877, 6) Yearning to Breathe Free, 1878-1916, 7) Saving the Dream, 1917-1945, and 8) The Eagle Ascendant, 1946-1988. Abundant illustrations supplement the concise articles.

1,001 Things Everyone Should Know about American History, by John A. Garraty. Reviews American history from 1704 up to the late 1980s by noting important ideas, people, and places pertaining to politics, literature, music, presidents, economics, and military matters. Black and white photographs and drawings illustrate the text.

Books for Parents and Children to Share

We divide our book selections into three age categories: 4-6, 6-8, and 8-10. Some children will be able to read several of the books by themselves, but other books might be too difficult. With your children, look through the books at a library, school, or bookstore, and decide which ones they can read. The books that are too difficult remain possible choices since you can read them aloud to your children.

Ages 4-6

All Those Secrets of the World, by Jane Yolen. Describes homecomings and furloughs that occurred during World War II. Lyrical text and splendid watercolor illustrations make this book perfect for reading aloud. Gives parents or grandparents an opportunity to talk about the war without using harsh text and brutal pictures.

Cowboys, by Glen Rounds. Presents the work and fun of a cowboy's life through amusing pictures and brief text. Shows kids a way of life that is relatively unknown.

The Buck Stops Here: The Presidents of the United States, by Alice Provensen. Depicts the first 41 American presidents through poster-style format using rhymed verse and full-page illustrations. This book serves as an entertaining and educational way to introduce the presidents to children.

Shaker Lane, by Alice and Martin Provensen (Viking Kestrel). Describes folks who live on Shaker Lane and their lifestyles. When a reservoir is built on their property, the residents of this rural community lose their homes to suburban development. This story provides a glimpse of a trend found in American society—destroying rural, less wealthy areas to create suburbs for those more prosperous.

When I Was Young in the Mountains, by Cynthia Rylant. Relates fond memories of a young girl's Appalachian childhood through amusing, yet loving, text and warm paintings. Children can observe a way of life from another era and sample a bit of Appalachian culture.

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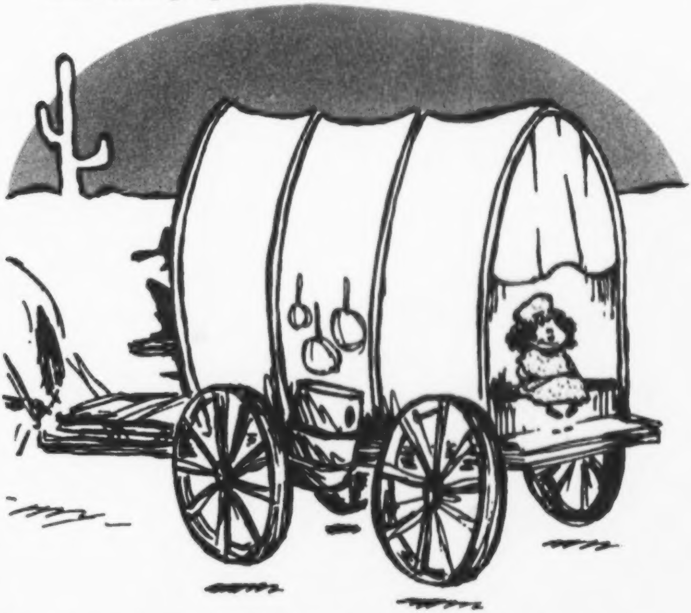
Ages 6-8

The Oregon Trail, by Leonard Everett Fisher. Portrays life during western expansion by using journals, photographs and historical documents. Features the people who immigrated westward, and captures their hopes and fears. Westward expansion becomes more real to children when they look at these authentic people and records.



New Providence, by Jorg Muller. A series of detailed paintings show some changes that have transpired in an American town over several years. Children can compare the pictures, discuss changes they notice, what those changes imply, and then reflect upon the pros and cons of ethical matters represented.

Scholastic Inc., publishes a series of small paperbacks which recount different events and periods in American history. These books relate historical events to the society, politics, government, and customs that shaped them. They help children understand the causes and effects of important historical episodes. Some of the titles include the following:

If You Lived at the Time of Martin Luther King, by Ellen Levine

If You Lived in Colonial Times, by Ann McGovern

If You Sailed on the Mayflower, by Ann McGovern

If You Traveled on the Underground Railroad, by Ellen Levine

If You Traveled West in a Covered Wagon, by Ellen Levine

If You Were There When They Signed the Constitution, by Elizabeth Levy

Jean Fritz is a popular author of biographies that focus on American history. Children enjoy reading these historically accurate stories. Some of her books include the following:

And Then What Happened, Paul Revere?
Can't You Make Them Behave, King George?
The Double Life of Pocahontas
Make Way for Sam Houston
What's the Big Idea, Ben Franklin?
Why Don't You Get a Horse, Sam Adams?

Ages 8-10

A 19th Century Railway Station, by Fiona Macdonald. The 19th century was a time of great change in America, and the railroad created some of that change. While focusing on trains and stations, children learn about the broader impact railroads had on the country during this time period.

Lyddie, by Katherine Paterson (Lodestar). Lyddie takes a job in a factory to help her family get out of debt and regain their farm. She may lose everything because she is willing to take a stand concerning her terrible working conditions. Through the eyes of this likeable character, children can see the effect of industrialization on society.

Nothing to Fear, by Jackie French Koller. This is a story about the Depression from the perspective of a young boy. It touches on the discouragement and hopelessness people experienced during this period in United States history. Readers also encounter the determination, bravery, and generosity that enabled communities to survive.

Poetry of the First World War, selected by Edward Hudson (Lerner). Writings of well-known, as well as obscure, poets invoke a powerful, stirring image of war. Presents, through verse and photographs, feelings of patriotism, disillusionment, resignation, anger, and fear. Deals with war, not by using a textbook filled with governments, dates, and places, but by showing some of the people who were involved, and their thoughts and feelings. Indirectly poses the question, "Does anyone really win a war?"

A Separate Battle: Women and the Civil War, by Ina Chang (Lodestar). Most history books only focus on men and their actions. This book focuses on women and their experiences during the Civil War. Graphic accounts, photographs, diaries and letters tell stories of women forming aid societies, serving as spies and couriers, working as nurses, fighting against slavery, and supporting women's rights.

Pearl Harbor Is Burning! A Story of World War II, by Kathleen V. Kudlinski (Viking). Frank moves to Hawaii and becomes friends with a Japanese-American boy named Kenji. When the Japanese bomb Pearl Harbor, questions of allegiance and trust arise. Presents ordinary people who are part of history.

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Magazines

Also ask your librarian for the following magazines:

Classical Calliope: The Muses' Magazine for Youth

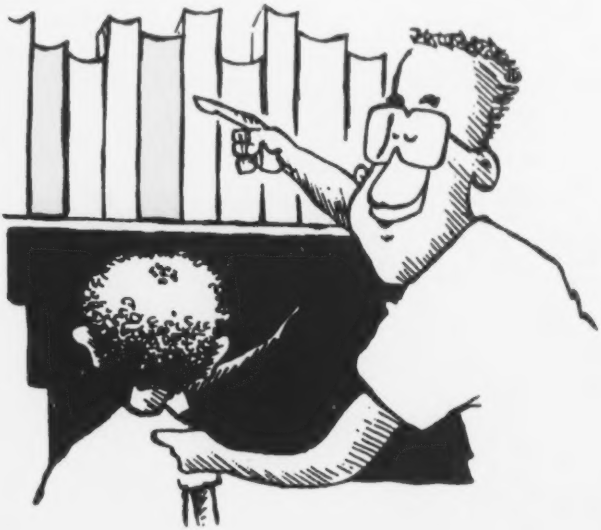
Cobblestone: The History Magazine for Young People

Cricket

The Goldfinch

Highlights for Children

Monkeyshines on America



Read-along Stories

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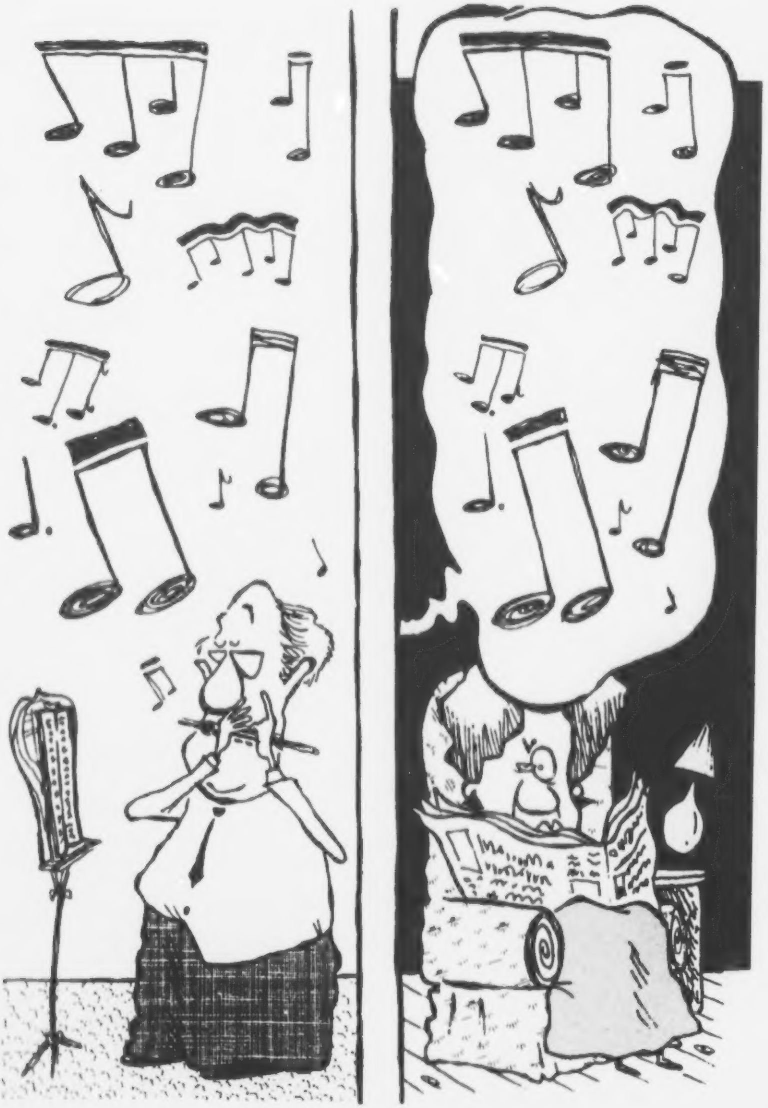


Marvin Composes a Tea

by Pam Hopper

Things to do *before* reading the story

Compose your own melody. Find several drinking glasses, fill them with different amounts of water, and then line them up on a table. Use a spoon to lightly tap the edges of the glasses, and make your own melody with the resulting sounds.

Marvin Sludge is a composer, which means he writes with sound. He spends most of his day practicing sounds on different instruments.

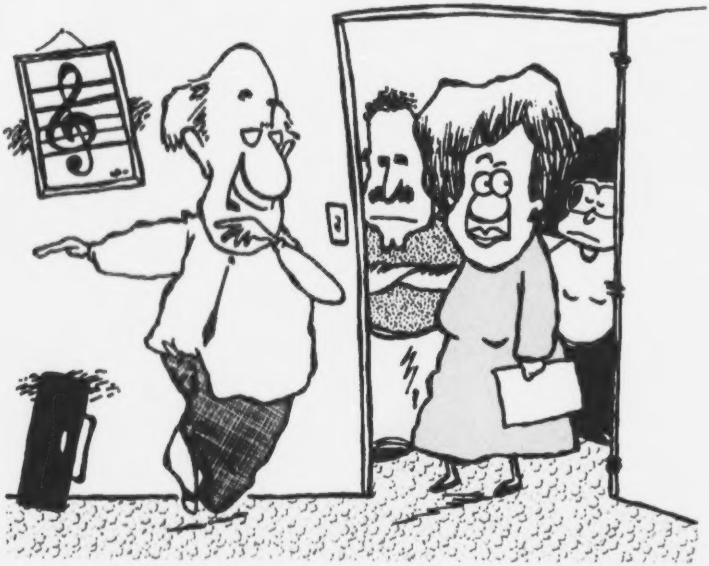
Not everyone in Marvin's apartment building has always appreciated his composing, especially Marvin's next door neighbor, Mrs. Pasquini. She convinced all of the tenants to sign a letter to ban Marvin's composing.

One day, while Marvin was playing the piccolo to see if a dee-diddle-dee was just the right sound to finish his new concerto, there came a knock upon his door. He was quite surprised to see all of the apartment house tenants.

"Good afternoon, everyone," Marvin said with a smile. "What can I do for you?"

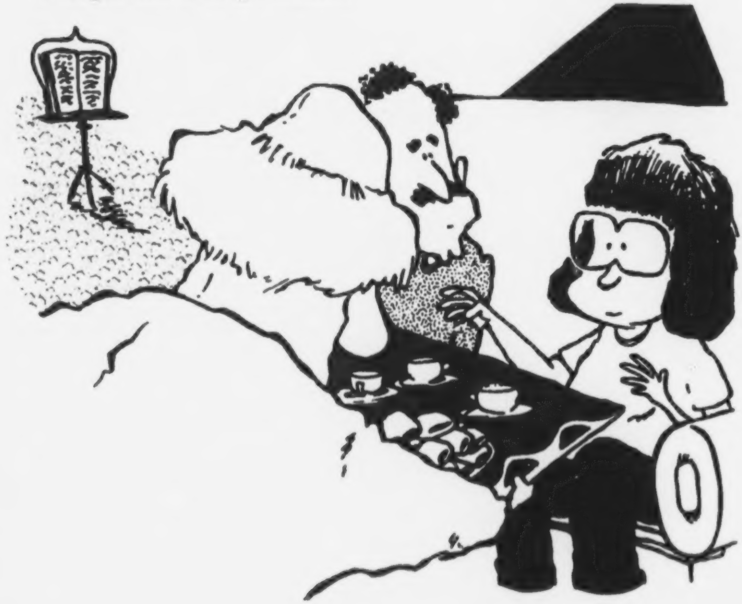
"We've come about your composing, Mr. Sludge."

"Ah, you're probably wondering what I'm working on, aren't you, Mrs. Pasquini? If you step into my apartment, perhaps I can play part of my new concerto for you." Marvin motioned for everyone to come in and, not knowing what else to do, they did.



"Please sit down, and I'll get some tea and fig bars for all of us. I'm so glad you decided to visit."

This wasn't what everyone expected. They had planned to give Marvin their letter of complaint and go home.



Marvin returned with a tray full of fig bars and teacups. "Tea, Miss Wentworth?"

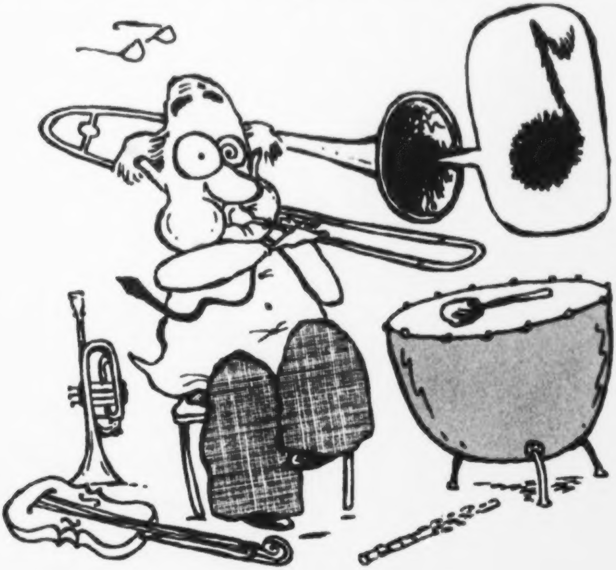
She nodded. "What were you playing before we knocked, Mr. Sludge?" she asked.

"That was the piccolo. I'm trying to find just the right sound for my new concerto, but I'm afraid I haven't found it yet."

"It must be difficult composing music," said Mr. Antonio, reaching for a fig bar.

"Which brings me to why we are here," interrupted Mrs. Pasquini.

"Ah, yes," said Marvin. "You wanted to hear the concerto I'm working on, didn't you?"

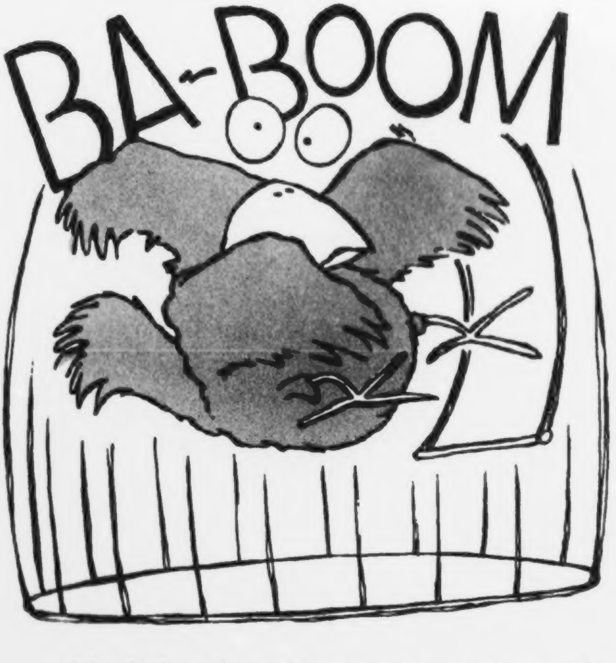


Before Mrs. Pasquini could say anything, Marvin began playing his concerto, using all his different instruments. When he finished, everyone clapped except Mrs. Pasquini.

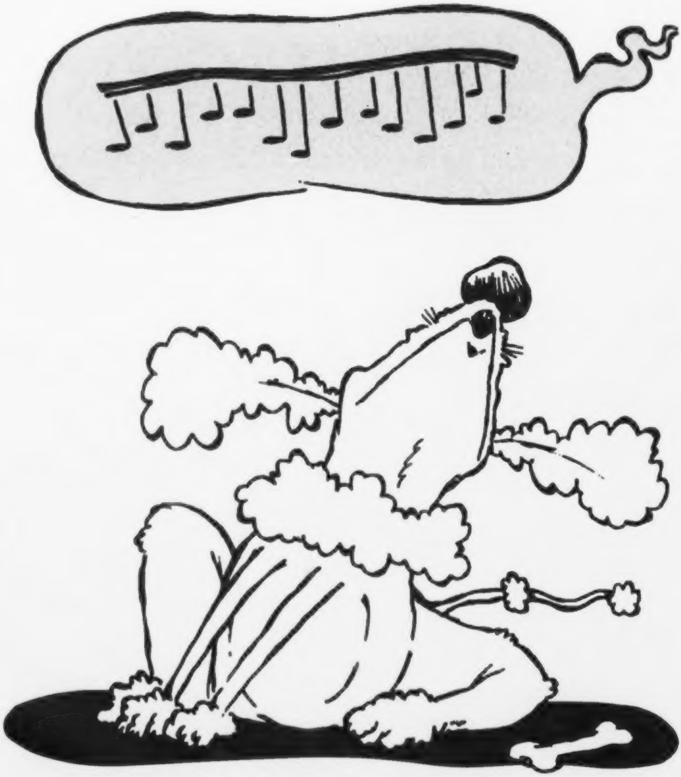
"I often hear you composing," Mr. Freebie said, "and I must say I like the part where the trombone goes: bwah-bwah hmm bwah-bwah hmm bwah-bwah hmm bwah."

"Why thank you, Mr. Freebie. I'm rather embarrassed that you can hear me playing. Does it bother anyone? I certainly wouldn't want to bother any of my neighbors."

Mr. Antonio cleared his throat slightly and said, "Well, my parakeet did faint one day. Nothing serious, but it was a little alarming to see poor Polly flat on her feathers like that. I think the part where the bass drum went ba-boom boom ba-boom ba frightened her."



"My dishes do rattle sometimes, but no harm is really done, and it keeps the dust off them," Miss Wentworth said, giggling.



“Well, Mr. Sludge, I must admit Fifi does howl when you play the violin, but I’m sure she’s just singing,” added Mrs. Oliver-Hollisday.

“I rather like the violin part, too, Mrs. Oliver-Hollisday. Does it really bother poor Fifi’s ears?” asked Miss Wentworth.

“I’m afraid it does, Miss Wentworth. I do enjoy violins. They make such lovely sounds. Don’t you think so?”

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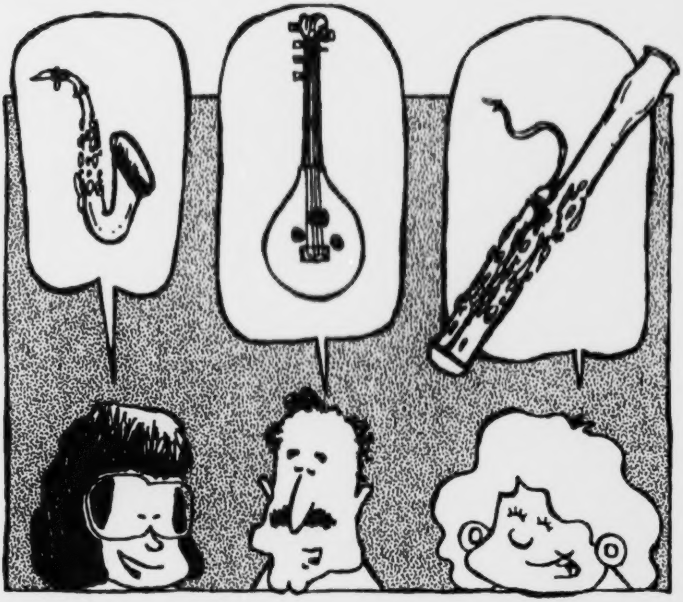
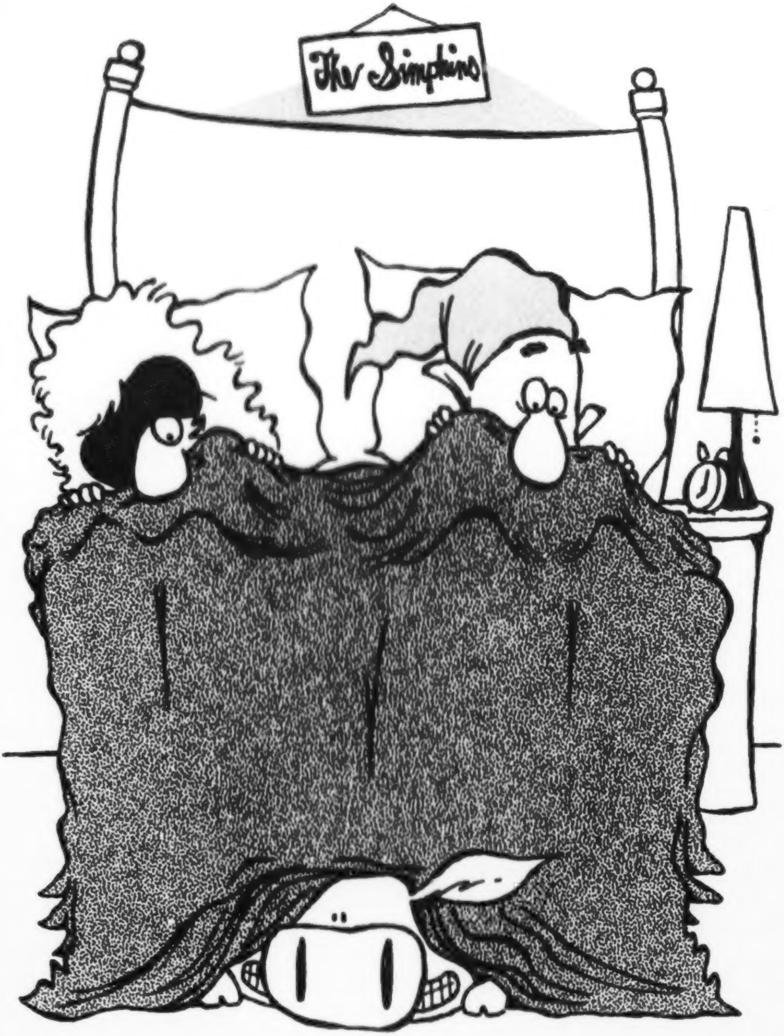
Miss Wentworth agreed, and then everyone began discussing their favorite instrument and why fig bars went so well with tea. In fact, everyone began talking to each other, something they rarely did.



Things to do *after* reading the story

Do you think the neighbors will give Marvin the petition? Write a new ending for the story. Now that you know about the different instruments Marvin could play, invent your own instrument. Describe the kind of sounds it makes and talk about whether or not you like those sounds.


The Simpkins

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Mrs. Simkin's Bed

by Linda Allen

Things to do *before* reading the story

Pigs are said to be good animals for pets. Would you like to have a pig for a pet? Why or why not?

"Stanley," said Mrs. Simkin to Mr. Simkin one day, "there's a pig under the bed."

"What color is it?" asked Mr. Simkin.

Mrs. Simkin looked again.

"It's a pink one," she said.

"Then we must find out who it belongs to," said Mr. Simkin. "We can't have a pink pig under the bed."

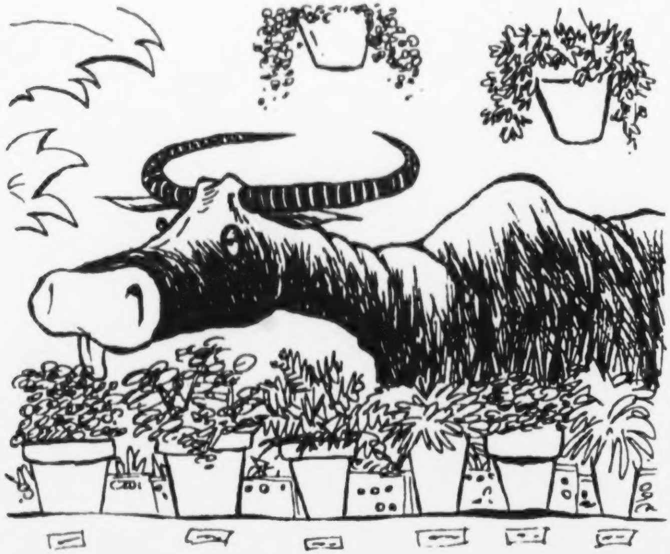
Mr. Simkin went to ask his friend if he had lost a pink pig.

"No," said his friend. "I lost half a pound of drippings once, on a bus, but I have never lost a pink pig."

"Then it can't be yours," said Mr. Simkin.

Mrs. Simkin mentioned it in passing to the lady next door. The lady next door said she was expecting a Shetland pony next week.

Mr. Robinson, who lived across the street, said he had a water buffalo in his greenhouse.



"Stanley," said Mrs. Simkin, "I really think we shall have to keep the little pink pig. If it doesn't belong to your friend, and the lady next door doesn't want it, and Mr. Robinson prefers his water buffalo, what else can we do?

"But whatever can we call it?" asked Mr. Simkin.

"Marcia," said Mrs. Simkin. "That's a nice name for a pig."

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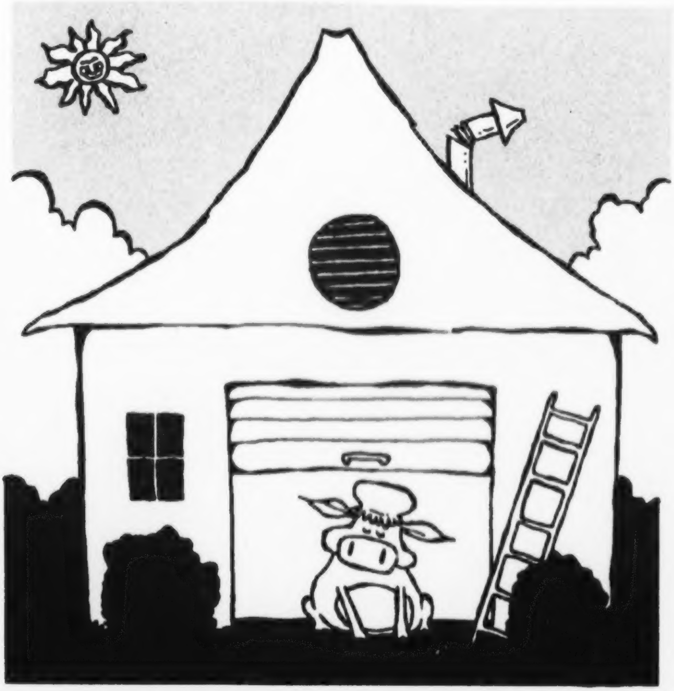
So they bought a little blue bonnet for Marcia and a ladder in case she wanted to climb the apple tree.

Marcia was a very nice little pig. She never sat on the postman, or threw jelly into the washing machine, or anything like that. Mr. Simkin and Mrs. Simkin were very fond of her.

Mr. Simkin built her a garage to sit in. Marcia was very happy.



On Mr. Simkin's birthday, Mrs. Simkin said to him, "Stanley, there's another pig under the bed."

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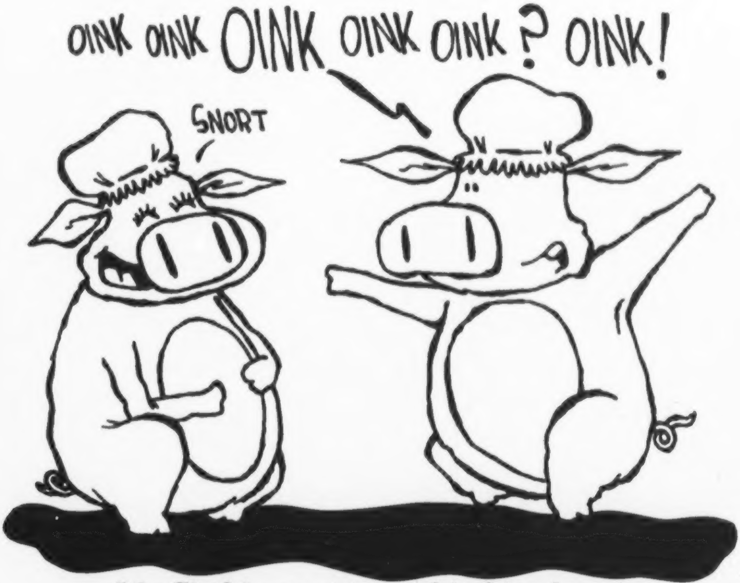
"Is it another pink one?" asked Mr. Simkin.

"Yes," said Mrs. Simkin.

"Then she can sit in the garage with Marcia," said Mr. Simkin.

So they named the new little pig Veronica, after the lady next door, and Veronica sat in the garage with Marcia, and they had conversations.


OINK OINK OINK OINK OINK ? OINK!
SNORT

Mr. Simkin went to see his friend again. "Have you lost a pink pig yet?" he asked.

"No," said his friend. "I haven't found my half pound of drippings yet either."

"Never mind," said Mr. Simkin. "I'm sure you will one day."

Mr. Robinson built an extension to his greenhouse. "I wonder if Mr. Robinson has found another water buffalo in his greenhouse?" said Mrs. Simkin.

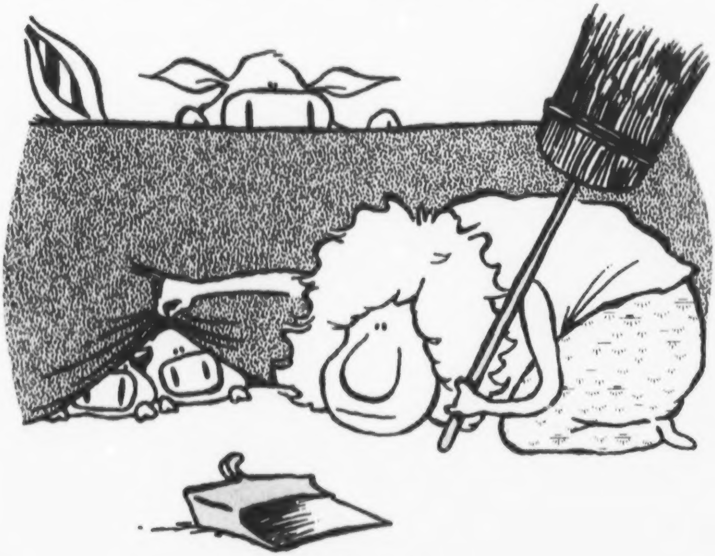
Mr. Robinson didn't talk to Mr. and Mrs. Simkin very much.

Mrs. Simkin found another pink pig under the bed on Shrove Tuesday. She found another one on the day that her niece won a prize for leaping over a wheelbarrow.

Mrs. Simkin found a lot of pink pigs.

"You'll have to clean under the bed more regularly," said Mr. Simkin to Mrs. Simkin.

"I do," said Mrs. Simkin, "but every time I clean under the bed I find another pink pig there."

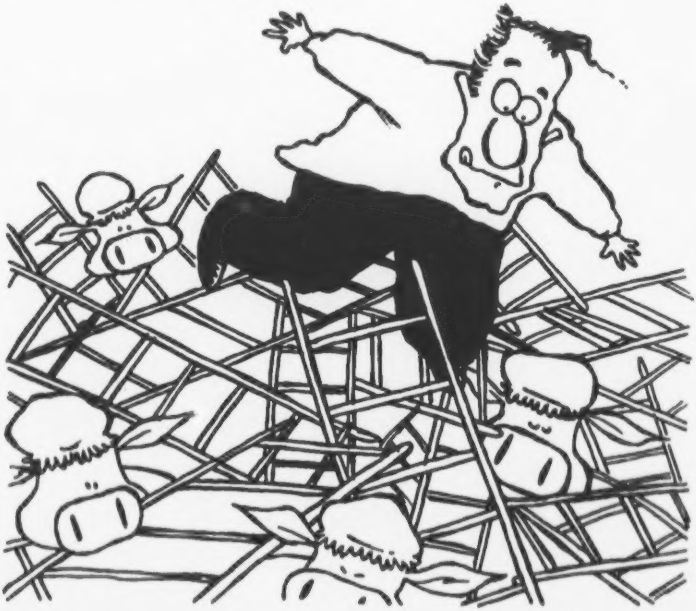


Soon they had forty-seven pink pigs.

Mr. Robinson didn't talk to them at all now.

The lady next door rode away on her Shetland pony.

The garage was quite full of little pink pigs. There were no more blue bonnets anywhere in town, and Mr. Simkin had to climb over all the ladders when he wanted to go out.



"It's not that I don't like pink pigs," he told his wife one day, "but it is rather inconvenient having so many. Shall we give some of them away?"

"Oh, no, Stanley," said Mrs. Simkin. "That would never do."

"Then there's only one thing to be done," said Mr. Simkin. "We'll have to sell the bed."

"Sell the bed!" exclaimed Mrs. Simkin.

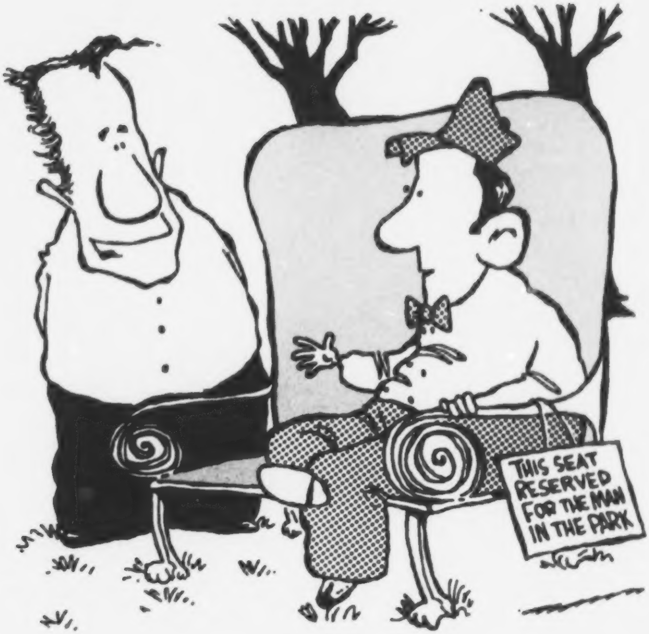
"It's the only way," her husband said.

Mrs. Simkin was sad.

"Do you want to buy a bed?" Mr. Simkin asked a man in the park."Oh, yes!" he said. "Why do you want to sell it?"

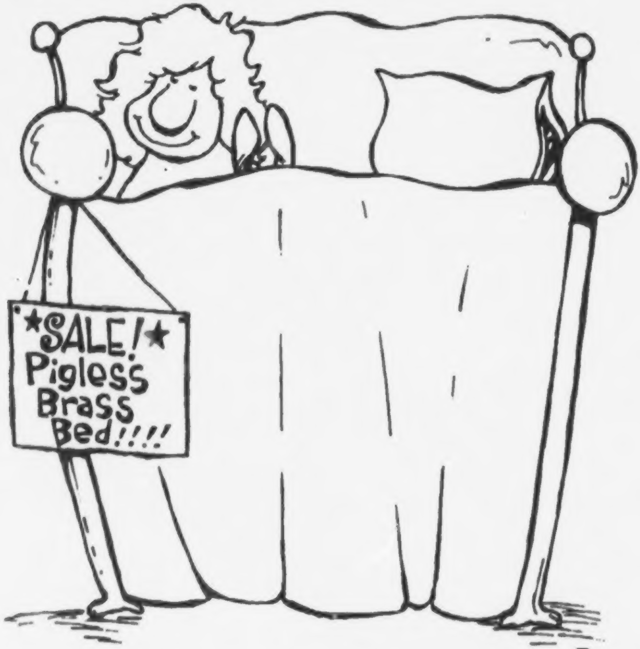
"We keep finding pink pigs underneath it," said Mr. Simkin.

"I don't mind that," said the man.


THIS SEAT RESERVED FOR THE MAN IN THE PARK

He went to the house with Mr. Simkin and looked at the bed. "It's a very nice bed," he said, and he took the bed away.

Mrs. Simkin bought a new bed. It was a lovely bed. It had large brass knobs on it. There were no pink pigs underneath it.



Mr. Simkin and Mrs. Simkin and the forty-seven pink pigs were very happy living all together.

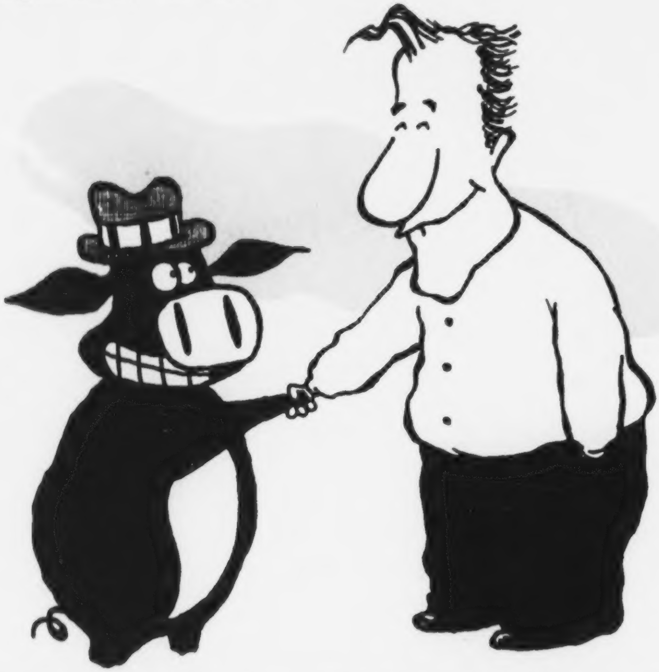
Mrs. Simkin used to clean underneath the new bed every day.

"Stanley," said Mrs. Simkin one morning, "isn't it strange? There's a pig under the new bed."

"What!" cried Mr. Simkin. "Our new bed! Another pink pig?"

"Oh, no, dear," said Mrs. Simkin as she shook her duster, "this is a black one."

Mr. Simkin sighed with relief. "That's all right then," he said.



Things to do *after* reading the story

Talk about how you think the pigs got under Mrs. Simkin's bed. Why do you think Mr. Simkin didn't mind having a black pig under Mrs. Simkin's bed?

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Talking Leaves

by Debi Anderson

Things to do *before* reading the story

Have you ever heard of "talking leaves"? What do you think this story will be about?

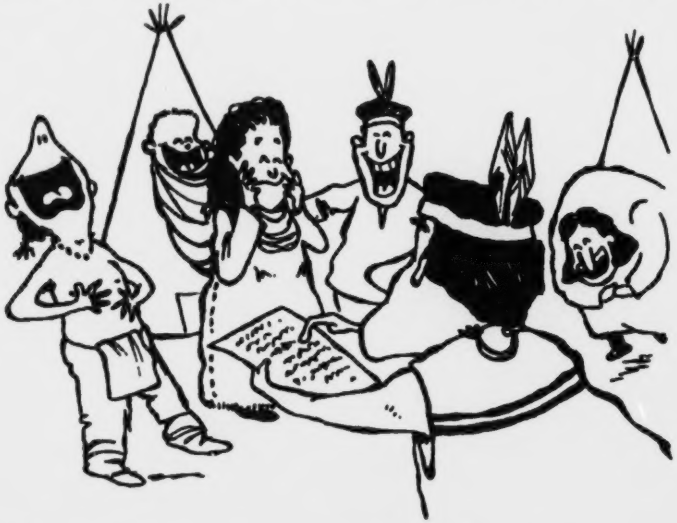
Sequoyah sat cross-legged in front of his home and stared out across the rolling hills. His dark eyes reflected the light from the rising sun. Suddenly he grabbed the white-man's letter that lay on his lap and lifted it high above his head—the white-man's letter that Sequoyah's people called a talking leaf.

"I will not give up," he vowed. "I will make a talking leaf for my people!"

Making an alphabet for the Cherokee had been Sequoyah's dream for many years now. Sequoyah thought that the alphabet was one of the things that made the white-man so powerful. It brought them messages from their chiefs, it gave them books of knowledge, and it gave them the work of their Great Spirit. If the Cherokee had their own written language then they, too, could have books of knowledge.

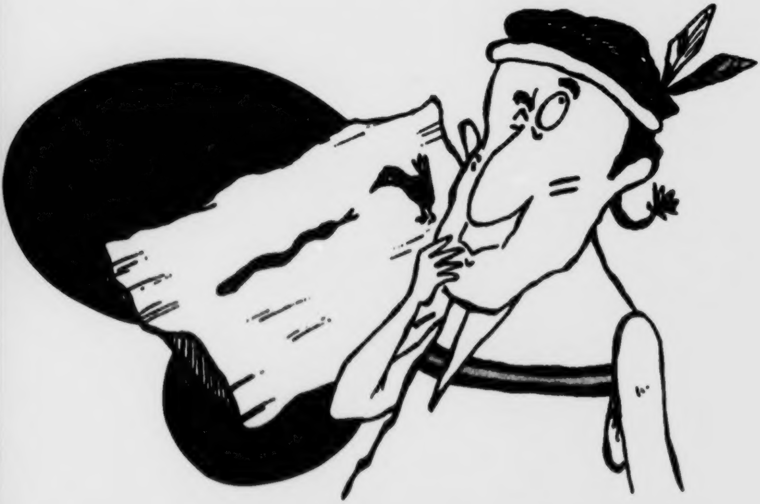
At first Sequoyah had stared at the white-man's letter as if, by looking hard enough, he could make the strange symbols speak to him. Later he had found an English spelling book with more of the strange symbols in it—the symbols that enabled the white-men to send their talk far away.

When he told his people that he would make it possible for them to have their own talking leaves they laughed at him. They called him crazy.



This did not stop Sequoyah. He had faced many challenges before. He had taught himself the art of working with silver and became the best silversmith in his nation. He was a self-taught artist, a blacksmith, a trader, and the best story-teller for miles around. He was once respected among his people who believed that Sequoyah was favored by the Great Spirit.

Now, although it hurt Sequoyah to see his people turn away from him in laughter, it did not stop him from following his dream.

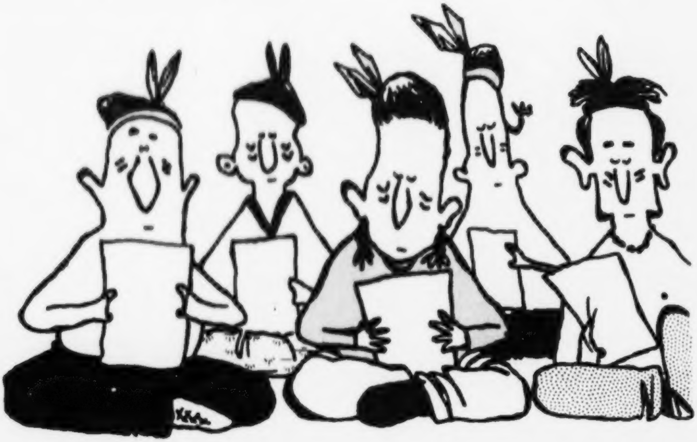


Sequoyah had started out by scratching symbols onto birchbark: a symbol of a bird for one sound that his people made, a symbol of a snake for another sound, and so on. After a year of this he had made over a thousand symbols. Sadly, he realized that neither he nor anyone else could possibly remember so many symbols.

Then, a new idea came to him. Many of the Cherokee words were made up of the same syllables. If he could make a symbol for each of those syllables it would make far fewer symbols that one would have to remember. His own name, for example, was made of three syllables, thus, three symbols: Se-Quo-Yah.

After ten years of working on his alphabet, Sequoyah succeeded. He had invented an alphabet with 86 symbols that represented every syllable of his people's language.

Sequoyah took his invention to the Cherokee people. Again they laughed at him. Sequoyah still did not give up. He knew that he had invented something special for his people and he was determined that they listen to him. After many weeks of persuasion, the Chiefs agreed to send Sequoyah twenty of their brightest young braves to be taught the alphabet.

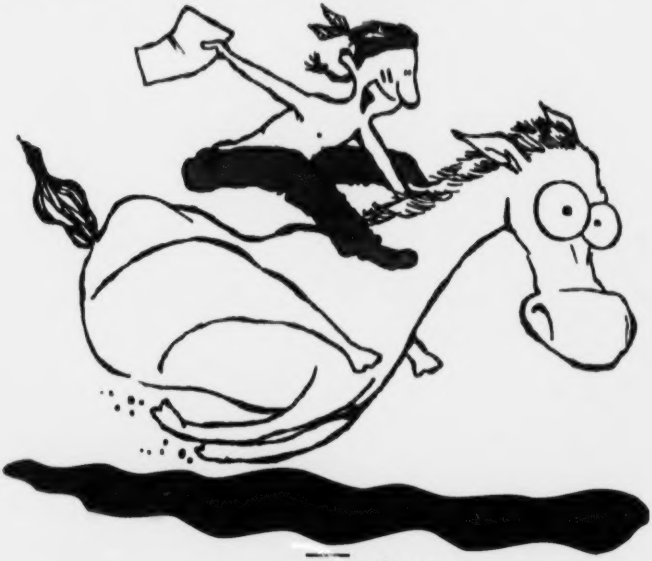


It did not take Sequoyah months or years to teach these young men the alphabet. It only took a few days. After the symbols were memorized the young men could also read and write. This was possible because the symbols represented whole syllables instead of single letters.

When the learning was over the Chiefs ordered a test to be given to the young men. The braves were separated into several groups far apart from one another. One group was given words and phrases to write down. Then the message was taken to another group where it was read aloud.

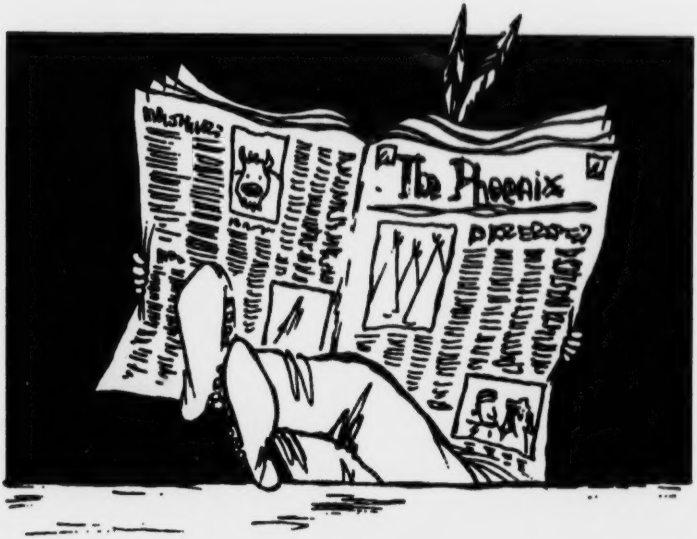
The test was passed. The Cherokee now had their own way of making talking leaves.

The importance of this invention was not realized all at once. Most of the Cherokee who learned the alphabet from the many teachers sent throughout the nation, thought of it as a game. Many of the young braves gave up hunting and fishing and spent all their time writing letters. Some even rode four or five days away from camp just to send a letter back to someone.



Within a short time, however, books were being written in the Cherokee language and the people began to understand the true meaning of Sequoyah's invention. They could learn many new things. They could write down their histories and preserve it for their children and grandchildren. They could learn of the world outside of their nation and of the ways of the white-man's God. They could write of their own Great Spirit and of their customs.

Schools were built, jobs were created, and in 1828, in New Echota, Georgia, a Cherokee newspaper called "The Phoenix" was printed. The doors of knowledge were truly opened for Sequoyah's people.



A silver medal was given to Sequoyah by his people and now—instead of laughing at him—they called him “Chief” and “Prophet." The U.S. Government gave Sequoyah a gift of money. Perhaps one of the greatest honors given him was that the great red cedars of California were named after Sequoyah.

Somewhere near the Red River in New Mexico, in an unknown cave, lie the remains of Sequoyah. His grave may be unknown, but he has left something for the Cherokee that will never be forgotten: the Talking Leaves!

Things to do *after* reading the story

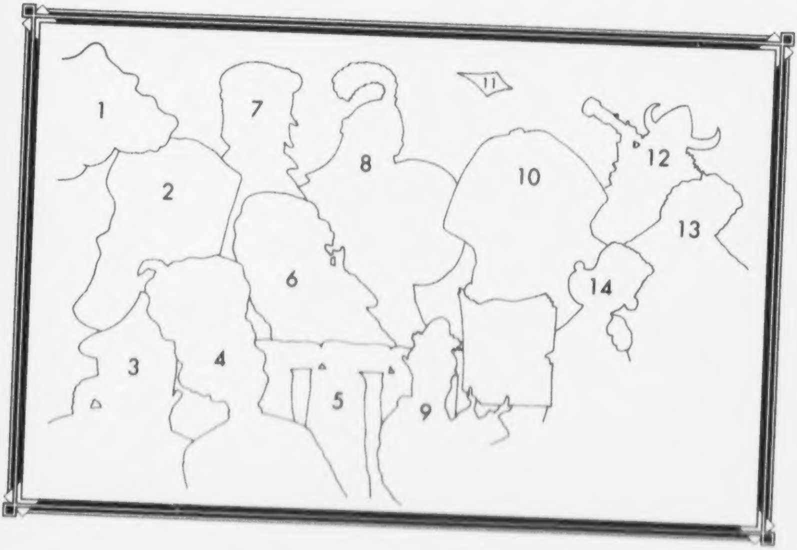
How would your life be different if there were no alphabet, and you could not read books or write letters to your friends? Sequoyah used pictures of a bird and snake to represent sounds. Count the number of syllables in your name. What symbol might you use to represent the sound of each syllable in your name? Draw a picture of your "new" name.

We hope you have had fun with these stories!

WHO'S

1. T. Rex
2. Easter Island, Chile
3. Emperor Qin, Builder, Great Wall of China
4. Marie Antoinette
5. Stonehenge, England
6. Ben Franklin
7. Amelia Earhart
8. Richard the Lion-Hearted
9. Julius Caesar
10. The Sphinx, Egypt
11. Kite about to be Struck by Lightning
12. Leif Ericson
13. Harriet Tubman
14. Smart Kid named Brian

WHO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Books of Special Interest to Parents

How Can I Prepare My Young Child for Reading? by Paula C. Grinnell. Presents ideas to assist parents in preparing their children for reading. Focuses on children from birth through kindergarten.

You Can Help Your Young Child with Writing, by Marcia Baghban. Suggests methods parents can use to help develop their children's writing at home. Offers writing and reading activities.

Beginning Literacy and Your Child, by Steven B. Silvern and Linda R. Silvern. Recommends ways parents can participate in the development of their children's literacy. Provides activities for talking, reading, writing, and listening.

Helping Your Child Become a Reader, by Nancy L. Roser. Provides suggestions for parents to help them encourage their children to read. Offers several practical activities for parents.

Creating Readers and Writers, by Susan Mandel Glazer. Suggests parents (1) encourage the use of language, (2) build positive attitudes toward reading, writing, and speaking, and (3) demonstrate the purposes of literacy. Includes book suggestions classified by age groups.

You Can Encourage Your High School Student to Read, by Jamie Myers. Offers practical ideas parents can use to encourage their teenagers to read more. Shows how reading can serve adolescents' needs and presents future needs that reading can fulfill.

Your Child's Vision Is Important, by Caroline Beverstock. Discusses how vision affects school work, how different eye problems affect vision, and how to spot vision problems. Includes suggestions for dealing with vision difficulties.

Encouraging Your Junior High Student to Read, by John L. Shefelbine. Discusses why reading for pleasure is important. Suggests how to find time for reading, gather a variety of reading materials, and help a child who has difficulty reading.

Cost per booklet is $1.75

Produced and distributed in cooperation with the
International Reading Association

101 Ideas to Help Your Child Learn to Read and Write
by Mary and Richard Behm

Offers 101 practical suggestions for parents to help their children develop reading and writing skills in the home environment. Ideas include bedtime activities, using television, travel, games, and many other ways to incorporate literacy into the home.

G08; $6.50

THE CONFIDENT LEARNER: HELP YOUR CHILD SUCCEED IN SCHOOL

How can parents help their children become confident learners?

First and foremost, parents act as models for their children. By making time for their children, by listening, and by praising, parents can greatly improve their children's attitudes and behaviors.

To assist in the wonderful and challenging role of being a parent and model for our children, *The Confident Learner* offers:

- ✔ helpful discussion and practical advice,
- ✔ answers to questions parents ask,
- ✔ fun family activities
- ✔ lists of books to read and to share.

It is not just your child's school and teachers, or even your child's natural talents and abilities, that determine his or her success in school. It is the way you laugh at her silly jokes, the hug you give him after his team loses the game, and your own love of spy novels. It's the rules you set, the chores you do together on Saturday morning, and the stories you tell about your own school experiences. Your everyday experiences with your children shape their actions and their goals.

E07; $9.95

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Submissions Policy for Stories and Articles for Parents and Children Together

Stories for Children and Parents:

1. Make the story fun for children—your primary audience. The adult reading along will enjoy the story if the child does.
2. Make sure that your story is acceptable to parents. We do not want parents to reject the story because it is inappropriate for their children. Writing a story that is interesting to children and at the same time pleasing to parents is a big challenge.
3. Your story should be no longer than eight double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.
4. Correct grammar and syntax are important. For the most part, we choose to model correct standard English.
5. Be careful about the vocabulary you use in your story. Rule out really long and difficult-to-pronounce words.
6. Make your stories gender inclusive. Do not use sexist terminology or ideas. Our stories must be interesting to both boys and girls.
7. You may illustrate your own story, but the illustrations must be line drawings in pen and ink only. The drawings must be able to be scanned, so keep detail to a minimum.
8. Stories that have action and dialogue work well for the audio portion of the magazine.

Articles for Parents:

1. Articles should contain practical information and helpful strategies. Anecdotes and other experiences modeling useful learning methods are particularly desirable.
2. Your article should be no longer than four double-spaced pages with one-inch margins.

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Man in the Park: Brian Sturm

"Talking Leaves"
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Sequoyah: Brian Sturm

Studio: Music House, 1101 N. Hartstrait Rd., Bloomington, IN 47401.

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- *Enjoying Art All around Us*
- *Making Writing Meaningful*
- *Speaking and Listening*
- *Improving Your Child's Memory*
- *Teamwork Learning*
- *Expanding Your Child's Vocabulary*

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